

TODAY

10P

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TODAY

10P

Workers' stake plan for Post Office

By Philip Bassett and Jill Sherman

Shake-up seen as boost for income and opportunity to end strikes

THE GOVERNMENT is examining plans to give postal workers a stake in the Post Office by introducing a form of employee ownership.

The move to give the Post Office more commercial freedom by offering staff a 49 per cent share of the business would improve industrial relations and help avoid a damaging state of new strikes by Post Office workers this autumn.

The move, which would be supported by senior managers, follows a period of bitter industrial relations over the

last 18 months, including a series of one-day strikes last autumn. Workers are already threatening a similar period of disruption this year.

The scheme would also boost income for the Post Office and allow it the commercial freedom to raise extra cash.

Shortly after the general election ministers instigated a review into the best way to give the Post Office greater commercial freedom in the face of mounting competition

from Europe. Managers have been urging the Government to allow the Post Office to form joint ventures with private sector partners and to be freed from the straitjacket of public sector borrowing controls.

Ministers have now completed the review and it is understood that they have asked senior officials in the Department of Trade and Industry to examine the options of giving the 190,000 employees a stake in the business.

One option is to give all employees shares in a Post Office transformed into a public corporation.

The total number of employee shares would be 49 per cent or less, leaving overall control with the Government.

The employees, as shareholders, would then get a return on any profits. Last month the Post Office declared a record profit of £577million for 1996-97, its 20th successive year of subsidy-free profit.

This could reduce money

generated for the Treasury but ministers believe that this would be more than offset by the complete transformation of the structure of the Post Office without resorting to full-scale privatisation as well as improving the poor industrial relations record.

Currently the Post Office on its own accounts for about 12 per cent of all working days lost through strikes in Britain. Senior managers are warning privately that last autumn's rash of one-day strikes in the

Royal Mail over plans to introduce US-style teamworking could be followed by a similar bout of strike action this year over the same issue in the run-up to Christmas.

But ministers believe that giving employees a direct stake in the performance of the business which employs them could hugely improve industrial relations and cut down the likelihood of strikes. Ian McCartney, Department of Trade and Industry minister

with responsibility for the Post Office, says employers and employees must "come together with a common approach and a common objective".

He says that "good employment relationships" have not existed in the recent past in the Post Office, and that "needs to be changed".

Other options being examined by Whitehall officials are understood to include a profit-sharing scheme. Senior managers have argued that restrictions on public sector pay have

kept down wages in the Post Office against pay in other communications businesses, and believe that an option like profit sharing could boost employees' income and increase their commitment.

The DTI has completed the first stage of its review, which is intended to work out how best to implement Labour's election pledge to give the Post Office greater commercial freedom rather than try to analyse whether greater freedom should be given.

Ministers and Whitehall officials are expected to begin a rolling programme of change towards the end of the year.

TV rights for Test cricket may be sold to highest bidder

By Jill Sherman, John Goodbody and Carol Midgley

TELEVISION rights for cricket Test matches may be sold to the highest bidder under proposals being considered by the Government to give subscription channels the chance to bid for some of the "Crown Jewels" of sporting events.

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, conceded yesterday that he was considering demands from cricket authorities to allow the sport to boost its income by selling television rights for home Test matches to satellite stations such as BSkyB and cable TV.

The sale could raise up to £150m for a four-year contract but it would outrage British cricket lovers who are used to the BBC, which has for years held the contract for home Test matches.

Mr Smith's comments fol-

low widespread opposition from sport and politicians to his decision to confine a Lottery-backed £100m national academy of sporting excellence to athletics, swimming and other Olympic sports.

Mr Smith confirmed that the Government had asked the three shortlisted bids for the academy to resubmit their proposals excluding football, rugby and cricket. The original plan put forward by John Major proposed an academy to encourage his favourite sports of football and cricket.

Britain failed to win a single gold medal in the recent athletics world championships in Athens. During the general election campaign Labour said urgent steps should be taken to put Britain back in the top ten of medals within ten years.

Ministers argue that major team sports such as football, rugby and cricket have substantial financial backing but they say that the academy would include talented young tennis players.

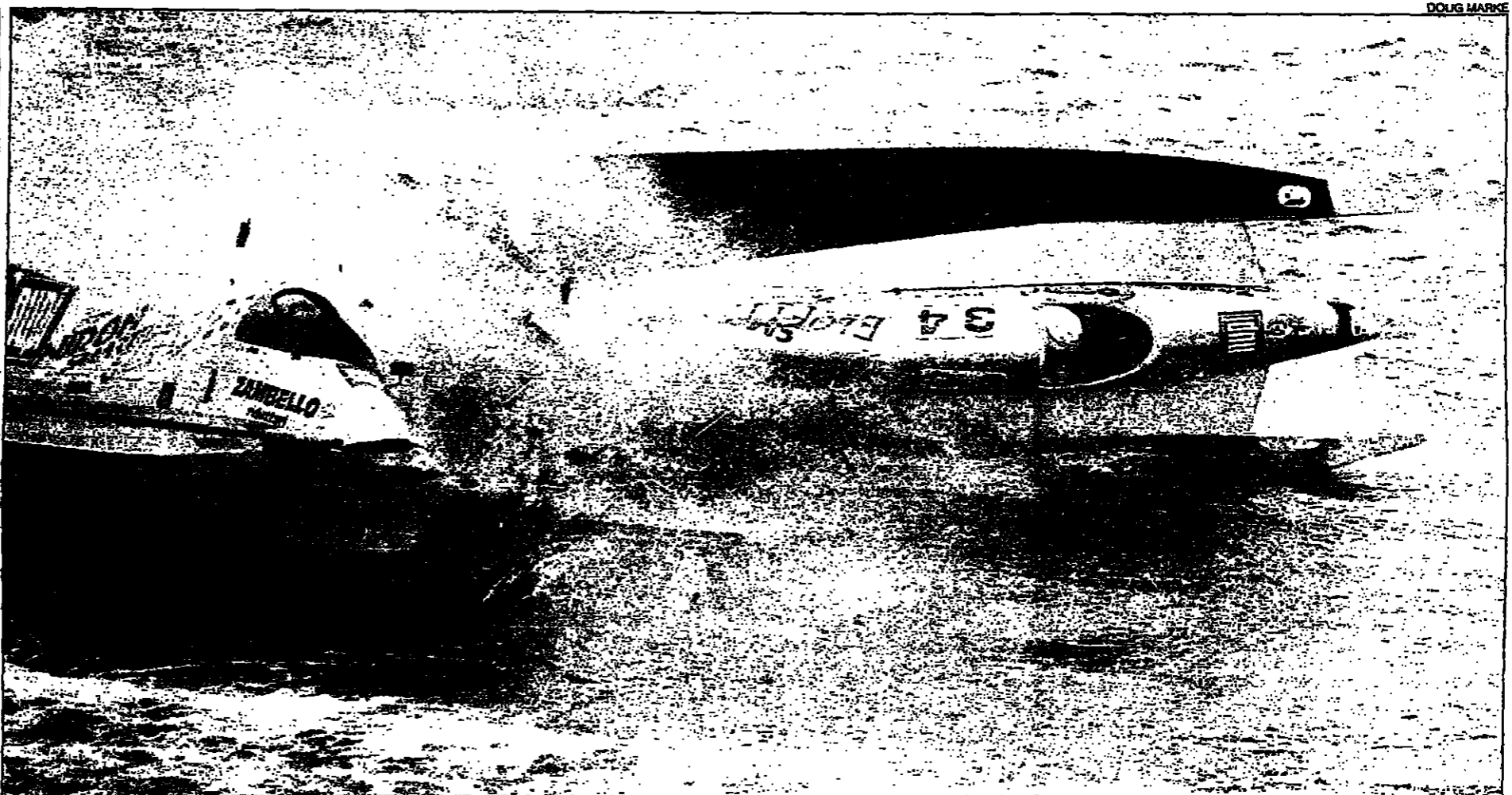
Mr Smith hopes that he will be able to choose one of the shortlisted bids to build the academy in Oxfordshire, Loughborough or Sheffield by the end of this month, ministers have not ruled out reopening the whole bidding process if the three schemes are inadequate.

He said that the headquarters should include first-class training facilities, an athletics track and the best sports medicine and sports science back-up. Lord MacLaurin, chairman of the England Cricket Board, said that if his game was not to be covered by the academy then it should be able to negotiate its own television contracts.

"Cricket is not a rich sport. If we are able to negotiate television contracts freely — which we're not able to do at the moment because Test cricket has to be on terrestrial television — then that really does harm our negotiating powers," he said.

"If the Government is not going to help us through the

Continued on page 2, col 4



The Italians Antonio de Tommaso, left, and Luca Badoer were unhurt after crashing at 60 mph in the European Formula Two Championships in Nottingham yesterday

Peter Hall attacks plan to sell historic Old Vic

By Dalva Alberg, Arts Correspondent

SIR PETER HALL yesterday accused the Canadian owners of the Old Vic of bringing his repertory company to the London theatre only to add glamour and boost its value before putting it up for sale.

In an attack on Ed Mirvish and his son, David, the director expressed dismay that the famous Georgian building would not provide the promised long-term home for his company, which moved in only weeks ago. "I have wondered whether the invitation to go there was to make it look more glamorous," he said, adding that he had been told that the final curtain must fall on December 8, the end of the company's first season.

Sir Peter pointed out that his productions had given the Old Vic its highest profile since it was occupied by the National Theatre under Laurence Olivier in the 1960s.

The owners, who bought the theatre from under the noses of office developers for £550,000 15 years ago, unex-

pectedly put it on the market at the weekend for £7.5 million to concentrate on their extensive theatre, restaurant and retail business in Toronto.

Responding to Sir Peter's attack, David Mirvish blamed the distance between Toronto and London for the decision to sell, a decision that was made only two weeks ago. "Money is one thing. Time is another. Much as I enjoy being in England, I can't devote the

time I'd like. At home, I know how to keep my theatre filled."

He said that the 743 people he saw at a performance of *The Seagull* in a theatre that seats 1,000 was "not enough to satisfy me", adding: "I want to see every seat filled. I can't do that from Toronto."

Of a reported £29 million loss he said: "I don't know where they got that figure. We are a private company and one of the privileges [of that] is that we don't give out our figures. Whatever we made or lost, I am happy with the experience of the Old Vic. We have had a great time." But, he said, if the theatre failed to sell, "I may well do something with Peter."

Sir Peter said of the sale: "It's awful. It was a sudden shock. We have been getting the best business in London for a straight play by far."

Even in August, traditionally a quiet month, *The Seagull* is filling up to 80 per cent of seats. *Waiting for Godot* is

Continued on page 2, col 6



Sir Peter: shocked

Students face loss of offers

By David Charter and Martin Fletcher

HUNDREDS of students celebrating their acceptance for university will be told this week that their place has been withdrawn because of an examination board mix-up.

The wrong A-level results from an estimated 1,000 students are believed to have been passed to universities and colleges.

A row has broken out about the mistake between the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas) and the boards involved, the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment.

Ucas passed on the grades to admission officers early last week so universities could tell students as soon as possible after Thursday's publication of A-level results whether they had secured the places they were aiming for. Owing to a computer error, some of the grades were wrong.

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Covent Garden tries to fill an ordinary role

By Dalva Alberg and Carol Midgley

THE Royal Opera House wants to appoint an ordinary Joe — or Josephine — to its board as part of a drive to shed its elitist image. Suitable candidates should be basic rate taxpayers, preferably from the North and probably will know more about Blur than Bellini.

More women and people from ethnic minorities are also being sought by Covent Garden as it tries to fulfill a pledge by Chris Smith, the Culture

Secretary, to create a "people's opera". The move comes with up to nine vacancies on the board of sixteen expected to be available by the end of the year in what is regarded as an ideal opportunity for the opera house to create "a truly representative board".

According to Keith Cooper, the opera house's spokesman, the board wants to appoint someone with a common touch. Candidates are unlikely to be high-profile Richard Branson-type figures. Instead, a person who has no wealthy connections or friends among the chattering classes is preferred.

The opera house is responding to concerns raised by the Heritage Select Committee last month when it emerged that only three directors came from outside London, only two were women and there was nobody from the ethnic minorities. Even the three directors based outside London were said to be "within commuting distance", living in the Home Counties.

Among the directors up for re-selection this autumn are Sir Derek Birkin, 67, former chairman of the RTZ Corporation; P.J. Butler, senior partner with KPMG Peat Marwick; Robert

Gavron, 56, chairman of the Guardian Media Group and a friend of Tony Blair who gave £500,000 to Labour before the general election; and Vivien Duffield, 51, the shoe heiress and partner of Sir Jocelyn Stevens, who is regarded as the country's most formidable fundraiser.

Their appointments last for three years but are renewable for another three. Further vacancies were created with the resignation of Baroness Blackstone on becoming a minister in the Government and Sir Jeremy Isaacs, who retires in September.



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Queen urged to boycott Amritsar

India's Prime Minister wants the coming state visit to miss out the scene of the 1919 Sikhs massacre.

Christopher Thomas reports

THE Queen's state visit to India and Pakistan has been thrown into disarray after India's Prime Minister appealed for her to abandon a planned trip to the site of one of the worst massacres inflicted during British rule.

Buckingham Palace officials, who toured India last month to make final preparations for the visit marking 50 years of the country's independence, had agreed in principle with their Indian hosts that the tour should include a visit to Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs, and its Golden Temple.

In 1919, Brigadier General Reginald Dyer ordered his men to open fire on a dense crowd of unarmed demonstrators in the city, killing 379 people and injuring more than 1,000. The incident was a milestone in India's quest for independence.

Yesterday, Inder Kumar Gujral was quoted as saying that it would be better if the

Queen Office source said, "We will be seeking urgent clarification. Obviously we do not want such an important state visit as this overshadowed by political protest."

In Amritsar, the bullet-holes from the slaughter of the Sikhs can still be seen in Jallianwala Bagh, a grubby little square of open ground surrounded by decrepit houses and a crumbling wall. On April 13 in 1919, there was only one entrance to the square, which was crowded with people protesting against restrictions imposed on the city in response to earlier riots. Dyer, Amritsar's Martial Law Commander, decided to end the illegal protest and teach the demonstrators a lesson. He ordered 50 soldiers to enter the square, stand either side of the only way out and open fire.

Dyer was reprimanded and asked to resign from the Army, although he kept his pension. Most of the British in India applauded his action and launched a collection for him, raising what was then the immense sum of £26,000, which enabled him to retire prematurely, but comfortably, in England. He maintained throughout his life that he had done a "jolly good thing".

The Buckingham Palace officials arranging the Queen's agenda are understood to have made it clear that she is not in the habit of making apologies for past actions, although she has been known to slip suitable sympathetic references into speeches. Indian officials were apparently quite happy that, with her visit, honour would be largely satisfied.

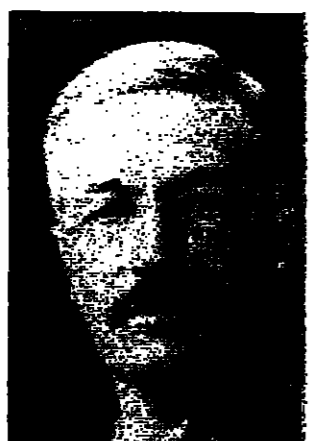
Sikh temple presidents and lay community leaders in Britain said yesterday that the Queen would have the support of British Sikhs if she chose to visit the Golden Temple. They accused the Indian Government of trying to undermine the Sikhs by preventing her visit, and dismissed the Prime Minister's demand for an apology for the 1919 massacre as an irrelevance.

"We will welcome the Queen as a good friend of the Sikhs," Dr Jagjit Singh Chouhan, a member of the Sikh nation's Panthic Committee said yesterday. "The Indian Prime Minister has no right to behave like this."

India has never apologised for the 1984 Golden Temple massacre, yet six Indian prime ministers have visited Amritsar since. At least Britain held an inquiry into their Amritsar shooting, and Dyer was de-



The Queen casts a lingering look at the Royal Yacht *Britannia* after disembarking at Aberdeen yesterday for the last time. She then drove with other members of the Royal Family to Balmoral. Below, Peter and Zara Phillips and Princess Beatrice stand at the rail, ready to disembark. Pictures by James Gray and Tim Graham



Dyer: ordered the Amritsar massacre

Queen did not visit Amritsar at all. Palace and Foreign Office sources said they would be seeking clarification of the Prime Minister's remarks from the Indian Government.

The same sources said that, until now, the Indians had foreseen no difficulty in the Queen visiting one of the major cities of the Punjab, which was long closed to tourists because of local unrest. They believe, however, that the Indians fear a political protest during the state visit, with Punjabis, including descendants of those shot during the massacre, demanding an apology from the Queen for the actions of a British officer nearly 80 years ago.

The Prime Minister's reported remarks do not entirely fit with what we have been given to understand by the Indian Government, one For-



Princess adds religious twist to an earthly tale

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

IN THE finest traditions of soap opera, it has centred on sex, money and betrayal. Yesterday a sprinkling of religion was added to the saga surrounding Dodi Fayed and Diana, Princess of Wales, when it emerged that she had asked to interrupt her holiday sailing around the Greek islands to meet the leader of the Greek Orthodox church.

The Princess, who is taking her third holiday in a month, is said to have asked to meet Bartholomew I while he was visiting the island of Chios in the Aegean. However, if her request was granted, it was kept secret.

Meanwhile Kelly Fisher — the model who is alleged that she is the spurned fiancée of

Mr Fayed, — continued to wreak her revenge. In a three-day deal with *The Sun* and the *News of the World*, she claimed that he planned to keep both herself and the Princess as lovers simultaneously. Ms Fisher is said to have received £200,000 for her story.

According to Ms Fisher, who is suing Mr Fayed for \$1 million for breach of contract, she was present on a yacht near to the one on which he and the Princess were photographed. She alleges that he shuttled between the two to keep both women happy. Neither knew what was happening.

Ms Fisher also claimed she might be pregnant with the

millionaire playboy's child. When she discovered that he had been seeing the Princess, Ms Fisher claimed that Mr Fayed asked: "Can't we work this out?"

While the Princess would be publicly paraded as his partner, she would remain his "secret sexual relationship", claimed the model, who described the suggestion as "repugnant".

In another twist in the story it emerged yesterday that Mr Fayed has a double. The imposter has seduced women, offered roles in films to movie stars and run up debts while claiming to be the Harrods heir. Mohamed Sead, a merchant seaman, is reported to be serving a two-



Kelly Fisher, left, who has said Dodi Fayed wanted to keep both her and the Princess as his lovers

year prison sentence in Canada for impersonation.

Mr Fayed received some support yesterday: from his ex-wife. In an interview published in the *Independent on Sunday*, Suzanne Gregard alleged that Ms Fisher had told her she had broken off the relationship with Mr Fayed two weeks before she launched her lawsuit.

BBC chiefs yesterday denied that they had snubbed Buckingham Palace by turning down a two-hour television extravaganza devised by Prince Edward to celebrate the Queen's golden wedding anniversary on November 19. The corporation said it had its own plans.

William Rees-Mogg, page 18

Fortunes of Danish monarchy take a dive

FROM CHRISTOPHER FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

IF THE House of Windsor thought it had problems, it could take comfort yesterday from another royal scandal in which Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark was photographed diving naked into the family swimming pool.

The pictures, which leave little to the imagination and are spread over a Swedish tabloid, are accompanied by text saying that the Danish pop singer Maria Montell, 28, was also naked and waiting for him in the pool. The photographs have enraged the country's royal court and revived Danish press venom against Sweden.

Stockholm's *Aftonbladet* last Thursday showed photographs of Queen Margrethe's

eldest son, 29, the heir to the Danish throne, diving from a window of a castle in south-west France with the caption: "What would Mummy say, Crown Prince Frederik?"

Denmark's biggest-selling tabloid, *Ekstra Bladet*, responded: "The mighty Swedish *Aftonbladet* newspaper has made a declaration of war against Denmark."

The Danish popular press tends to treat its Royal Family with respect, but the focus has intensified on Prince Frederik, a bachelor, since his younger brother, Prince Joachim, 28, married Alexandra Manley, a Hong Kong British citizen, in 1995. Montell and Prince Frederik "eloped" to Vietnam in May, sidestepping

the paparazzi at Bangkok airport, when the Prince headed a trade mission to Thailand.

In the latest scandal, Danish newspapers published more sedate pictures of the couple in swimwear, shot by the same French photographer from outside the grounds of the Chateau de Caix, near Cahors, owned by the Prince's French-born father, Prince Henrik.

Even those pictures caused something of a stir in Denmark, where publication of such pictures is rare. Although taking photographs of people on private property is an offence under Danish law, the royal court would take no action, a palace official said.

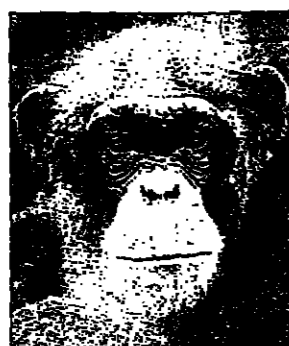
"They said you'd been with someone else...I don't care...this is love."



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Trick or treat shows chimps know how to keep a secret



Chimps will keep their mouths shut about food

CHIMPANZEES can work out when companions are unaware of danger, then go out of their way to issue warnings. Their ability to show empathy has reinforced the view that chimps are closer to humans than they are to other primates.

They can also realise that a companion is unaware of a nearby stash of food — and keep the secret to themselves. The new observations, described to the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, have not been seen in rhesus or Japanese macaque monkeys. Professor Sally

Nigel Hawkes reports on findings of empathy in one of humanity's closest relatives

Boysen of Ohio State University tested three pairs of chimpanzees in a colony at the university.

Two adult males, Kermit and Darrell, who have known each other for 18 years, produced the most clear-cut results, although two females and mixed pair followed the same pattern. The tests involved hiding either a treat — a few grapes — or a threat in such a way that only one was aware of it. The objects were hidden in the next-door cage in full view of one

of the chimpanzees, while the other was kept away in a room near by. Professor Boysen wanted to establish whether the chimpanzee who knew the secret would realise that the other was unaware, and what he would then do. The test with the grapes produced no shared information.

"You wouldn't expect it to work with the food, since no chimpanzee is going to willingly inform another about the presence of food that they themselves don't have

access to" said Professor Boysen. For a threat, a researcher carrying a tranquilliser dart hid in the next-door cage. All the animals had experience of the darts and saw the researcher as a predator. This produced a very different result.

When Kermit was released into the cage where the researcher with the dart was hiding, Darrell became very agitated. He turned to Kermit with fear grimaces and alarm noises, while his hair stood on end all over his body. Kermit

then produced the same fear responses and left the cage, having effectively been tipped off that it was dangerous.

Professor Boysen said: "Based on what we believe about the emergence of these skills in humans, this suggests that Darrell, in a sense, put himself in Kermit's place. I think Darrell was aware that Kermit couldn't have known that the predator was there."

When the experiment was repeated in such a way that both

animals were aware of the potential threat, neither reacted in such a striking way. "They responded dramatically when the threat was present but only when the other animal in the pair was uninformed," she said.

"This suggests that one chimp does recognise the different knowledge state in the other chimp. Darrell didn't know what the predator was going to do, so he had to make a prediction, a rapid assessment of the situation. He made the decision that there would be trouble if he didn't let Kermit know about the predator."

Cartoon sexism bugs women in search of heroes

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

BUGS BUNNY is corrupting young American minds by reinforcing gender stereotypes, two psychologists complained at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association at the weekend.

In the interests of science, Cynthia Spicher and Dr Mary Hudak, from Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, watched episodes from a range of cartoons shown regularly on American Saturday morning television. They concluded that there are four times as many male characters in the cartoon world as female ones. Worse still, the males were active and dominant, while the females were droopy and characterless.

"Male characters are powerful, strong, smart, aggressive and so on," Dr Hudak told the meeting in Chicago. "Occasionally there's a token female character, but she's like lime jelly — she's bland."

The researchers categorised 118 cartoon characters from a single episode of the top eight cartoon shows: *The Bugs Bunny/Tweety Show*, *Aladdin*, *Ninja Turtles*, *The Mask*, *Eek! Stravaganza*, *Spiderman*, *Tick and Life with Louie*. The characters were rated according to their sex, prominence, gender stereotyping, aggressive behaviours and occupational roles.

The male characters were

much more likely to be in positions of authority — as policemen, guards, soldiers, pilots or bouncers. There were only two female-dominated occupations: nurses and telephone operators. Female characters sometimes appeared as doctors, scientists and police officers, but also popped up as housewives, princesses and bathing beauties.

Male characters, by contrast, were space commanders, hunters, crimefighters and street rats. They were also at the centre of action, as aggressors, victims or both. Many were involved in arguments, "providing questionable images for young viewers", though the researchers accepted

Male characters are powerful and strong. Occasionally there's a token female, but she's like lime jelly — she's bland

that this, at least, reflected the real world. Had they studied British television, they would have found that female characters have been outnumbered, outsmarted and outgunned for generations. The only female in *Bill and Ben* is the non-assertive Little Weed; Mari-

na rarely showed the same gallantry as her male colleagues in *Stingray*, and Mr Men tended to stick together. Lady Penelope was glamorous but sedate compared to the go-getting lads in *Thunderbirds* and Captain Scarlett did not leave much room for his angels. When confronted by sheep rustlers in *A Close Shave*, Gwendoline is left standing by the resourceful Grommit, a dog — but then so too is his owner, Wallace.

"Women's occupational roles have changed in rather pronounced ways over the past three decades, yet a mere sprinkling of female characters were shown in non-traditional occupations and roles," the researchers said.

"Cartoons are one of the many cultural influences on the young, yet they can hardly be conceived to be trivial in their influence. Entertainment in all its forms is embedded in the larger cultural milieu. As such, it says something about what is valued and understood in the particular culture it comments on."

"Cartoons, in their current state, are depicting significant differences in the status, behaviour, and capabilities of female and male characters. Thus, cartoons tell cultural stories that cannot help but inform young minds about what they are to become."

That's all, folks.



Bugs Bunny is strong and smart, but cartoon women are too often bland

Welsh told to give up sex for equality

By Robin Young

THE Equal Opportunities Commission has managed to de-sex the Welsh language.

The commission asked a leading linguist and academic to report on avoiding sex discrimination in Welsh, which has nouns of masculine and feminine gender, with adjectives and pronouns varied to agree with them. Her recommendations are to become the basis of a set of guidelines for employers, public utilities and local authorities.

The gender-ridden nature of the language has brought problems for employers and public bodies anxious to avoid infringing the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 while observing the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993. They have to use Welsh in all public communications, but equally have to avoid anything that might be considered sexist.

Since even the Welsh for manager, (*rhedwr*) implies that the person involved is a man, this can be very tricky indeed. A secretary (*ysgrifennyddes*) is always assumed to be female, and a coal miner (*glwr*) male.

Now Dr Gwenllian Awbrey of the University of Wales, Cardiff, has provided a solution. She has shown how to avoid the pitfalls of the legislation by using the plural or both male and female forms in job adverts and other

material. Val Feld, director of the Equal Opportunity Commission in Wales, said: "One simple way is to refer to someone as 'the successful candidate' rather than he or she."

The commission has been examining the impact of "gender specific" advertisements, finding that the language often complicates matters. For instance while a doctor (*meddy*) in Welsh can be either male or female, an *athro* is a male teacher while a female teacher is *athrawes*. Though *meddy* refers to both men and women, it is always of masculine gender.

To get round secretarial discrimination, Dr Awbrey suggests advertising for staff *ysgrifennyddol* (secretarial staff) or a *swydd ysgrifennyddol* (secretarial post). An alternative, she suggests, is a neologism to denote a male secretary: *ysgrifennydd*. A *gyrrwr* (driver, male) could be partnered by a new female equivalent, *gyrrwrfa*.

Dr Awbrey's other suggestions include using plural rather than the singular to allow reference to mixed groups of men and women without needing to specify their sex.

"The grammar is on the whole sensitive to gender only in the singular," Dr Awbrey notes. "The plural takes very little note of gender."

Rural group says towns can supply new housing

By Michael Hornsby, Countryside Correspondent

VAST tracts of countryside are being needlessly used for housing because the availability of building sites in towns is being ignored, the Council for the Protection of Rural England claims today.

Urban sites that unexpectedly fall vacant often supply more than half the land for new homes, but local authorities make little allowance for this in their development plans, the CPRE says in a report published today.

Tony Burton, the organisation's assistant director, said: "Because windfall sites cannot be certainly identified in advance, most local authorities assume no contribution at all from such sites to their total housing requirement or greatly underestimate it."

Not only are greenfield sites in the countryside unnecessarily allocated for new housing, but urban windfall sites are then used as well, so that local authorities often end up overshooting their own targets. Once a greenfield site has been allocated, it is difficult to reverse a planning decision.

Windfall sites become available when, for example, an industrial site is vacated. The CPRE argues that local authorities can make a reasonable guess at the future contribu-



Raynsford: green groups oppose his plans

tion of such land to their housing needs by keeping accurate records. The report, commissioned by the CPRE from David Tydesley and Associates, looked at the performance of 50 local authorities at county, district and metropolitan borough level. Only 24 of those surveyed kept substantive records of the contribution of urban windfall sites to housebuilding. Only 14 allowed for such sites in their development plans, and 11 of these hugely underestimated the actual supply of such land. Local authorities are ham-

pered, the CPRE says, by a government rule prohibiting them from classifying as "windfall" any site larger than one hectare. Yet past trends show that up to 20 per cent of the housing required by local plans comes from larger urban sites that fall vacant unexpectedly. "The government attitude is dictated by a desire to maintain pressure on local authorities to find more land for housing, based on inflexible long-term projections that are likely to overestimate the real need," Mr Burton said.

The CPRE has been campaigning against government plans to build 4.4 million homes by 2016. The plans are based not on significant population growth, but on trends suggesting that more people will be living on their own. Green groups are dismayed that the new Government sees no case for revising this projection and is declining to endorse the Tories' pledge to build up to 75 per cent of the homes on reclaimed land in towns.

Nick Raynsford, the Planning Minister, said last month that it was not possible to find reclaimed sites to meet housing needs in the South of England, the area of biggest projected demand.

Three days that mean the world to old men

TWO 106-year-old men are fiercely contesting who is the oldest man in Britain. Last week the *Guinness Book of Records* handed the title to George Cook of Surrey after the death of Vinson Gulliver, 109.

However, David Henderson of Laurencekirk, Mearns, claims he is three days older than Mr Cook. Mr Henderson, who still runs a 1,000-acre farm, although he lives in a nursing home, has records that show he was born on June 14, 1889. Mr Cook was not born until June 17.

"There are not many of us about looking for these records," Mr Henderson said. A *Guinness Book of Records* spokeswoman said she was looking into the matter. "We are waiting to receive documents such as a birth certificate from Mr Henderson's family which prove his age before we can comment. The whole process will depend on the speed at which his family send the documents to us."

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'Warhead' will target tumours

A NEW kind of cancer-killing "nuclear missile", which can seek and destroy tumours with radiation, has been developed by scientists.

The weapon, devised by researchers at Nottingham University, is an antibody with a "warhead" in the form of a cancer-killing radioactive particle. Antibodies, part of the body's own defence system, are able to home in on tumours like a guided missile by locking on to a substance which occurs on the growth's surface. Radiotherapy can therefore be directed straight at a tumour, unlike a radiation beam, which also kills healthy cells in its path.

The technique was first developed in the 1980s, but

until now the antibodies used have been too big and cumbersome. The Nottingham team, led by Dr Mike Price, has created a smaller, stripped-down version which is better at piercing a tumour's armour and moves round the body more quickly.

Dr Graeme Denton, one of the researchers, said: "This is a form of targeted radiotherapy. We are using these antibody fragments to take lethal short-range beta radiation directly to cancer cells. We need to create a lightweight, speedy carrier. This smaller 'missile' will be able to penetrate even better, taking its radioactive weaponry to the heart of the tumour."

The team believes the mini-

antibody will not only hit primary targets, but also secondary cancers which develop in later stages of the disease. A special camera can be used to track the "missiles" as they home in.

Dr Denton added: "This technique could be used on quite a number of cancers, such as breast, ovarian and bladder."

The treatment, news of which is reported in the *British Journal of Cancer*, will have to go through extensive trials before doctors can consider using it on patients. A laptop computer containing a year's work by Professor David Newell, a leading cancer research scientist, has been stolen from his car outside a

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a secret Polish A-level student begs for Oxford cash

A penniless pupil cannot afford to study, reports David Charter



Miss Wojtowska, from Millfield School, wants to study Japanese at Pembroke College, Oxford, below



Miss Wojtowska, from Millfield School, wants to study Japanese at Pembroke College, Oxford, below

A PENNILESS Polish student who gained five As in A-levels, though English is her third language, is appealing for financial help so that she can take up a place at Oxford University.

Paulina Wojtowska, 18, who started learning English five years ago, won an international bursary to study for her A-levels at Millfield School, Somerset. The boarding school, which is one of the most expensive schools in Britain, with annual fees of £15,000, describes her as the best linguist they have ever had.

Despite her spectacular success, she has so far failed to find further funds to read Japanese at Pembroke College, Oxford, so she can realise her ambition to become a diplomat.

Paulina's father, a builder in the industrial southeastern Polish town of Rzeszow, cannot afford the £9,300 tuition charges for overseas students at Oxford, combined with £3,000 college fees and around £3,000 living costs.

Speaking from her parents' flat near the Polish border with Russia yesterday, Miss Wojtowska said: "I would love to go to Oxford. But £15,000 a year is not something I can afford. I have been trying to get funding in Poland as well but it is really difficult. Basically, the Polish Government cannot afford anything like it."

Miss Wojtowska was overjoyed to hear about her top grades in economics, general

studies, French, mathematics and further mathematics, and is waiting to learn on Thursday how she fared in Russian GCSE.

She added: "I want to study Japanese because I love it and there is hardly anywhere to study it in Poland. I thought it would be really useful in my career because I hope to be a diplomat for Poland."

Roger Adams, tutor in

charge of university entries at Millfield, is leading an appeal to raise funds for Paulina. But his contacts with Japanese companies and the British Council in Poland have so far met with no success.

"She is certainly one of the finest scholars I have known in 25 years in the job," said Mr Adams. "She is absolutely outstanding; probably one of the finest brains we have had

in this college." Miss Wojtowska missed out on a Duvivert Scholarship, which is a bursary available from Oxford itself to help students from central and eastern Europe.

Beverley Potts, international officer at Oxford University, said: "It is very disappointing when someone from eastern Europe gets the grades to come here and cannot make it, but sometimes they cannot and it is getting quite close to the start of term for this student."

A Slovak-born student, Andrej Machacek, is heading for Balliol College, Oxford, after scoring six As and a B in his A-levels at Forest School, near Snarresbrook, East London. He achieved As in biology, chemistry, further mathematics, general studies, German, and mathematics, with a B in government and politics.

A Nigerian-born teenager from Sheffield has achieved A grades in seven A-levels. Chika Uzogwe, 18, from the independent Birkdale School, is planning to read medicine at Cambridge after gaining As in mathematics, chemistry, biology, French, general studies, physics and further mathematics.

He said: "I enjoy all the studying. I'm just happy for everyone who got the passes they needed." A school spokesman said: "Chika is extremely able and worked very hard. We are very proud of him."

Letters, page 19

Catholics criticise Anglican over gay clergy

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE Catholic Church in Scotland last night criticised an Anglican bishop who wants homosexual clergy to be ordained and gay marriages recognised.

An appeal for the Anglican Church to consider such proposals is made in a new book by the Right Rev Richard Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh and head of the Scottish Episcopal Church, due to be published on September 1.

A spokesman for the Catholic Church in Scotland said: "We feel that Bishop Holloway unfortunately succeeds in promoting the caricature that Christianity is only interested in sexuality... There are other and more important parts of life which could be looked at more fruitfully."

Although the Scottish Episcopal Church plays no formal role in Church of England matters, it is a fellow church within the Anglican Communion and its bishops take part in the 1998 Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops.

The Church of England's official line, set out in 1987, is that homosexual acts fall short of the Christian ideal and require repentance.

However, in his book, *Dancing on the Edge*, Bishop Holloway calls for the Church to "remove itself from the field as arbiter of the conduct of responsible adults".

In extracts serialised in the *Scotland on Sunday* newspaper, he says that couples who live together should be treated equally by the Church with those who are married, that gay couples should be recognised with options of marriage, registered partnerships and rights for cohabitants, and that paedophilia is one of the most "tragic and intractable of human conditions" and that paedophiles can subvert their urges into creative work with young people.

Bishop Holloway writes: "It is right to want to protect the lives of the vulnerable from exploitation, but it [the Church] ought to remove itself from the field as arbiter of the conduct of responsible adults."

How Tommy the tortoise rose from a shallow grave

BY MARK HENDERSON

IT WAS a warm evening in the garden. Eileen Cattell was watering her hanging baskets when she noticed a movement in the earth near her feet.

Out from the soil rose the head and front legs of the family's pet tortoise, buried the previous day after an apparent drowning. Mrs Cattell, of Hailthorpe, near Southend, said: "It was like something out of a

horror film. I just screamed."

Yesterday the pet, Tommy, was recovering with little more than pneumonia after surviving a series of events that might challenge a more active animal: 20 hours in the bottom of the garden pond, followed by 30 hours of being buried alive. The ability to go into temporary hibernation saved its life.

Mrs Cattell's husband, Martin, a self-employed builder, adopted Tommy 23 years ago

when he found it in his parents' garden. He noticed his pet had disappeared last Sunday afternoon. At first he thought it had sought out some shade from the hot temperatures, but began to worry when it failed to come to the back door for its breakfast of lettuce and vegetable peelings on Monday morning.

After a two-hour search, Mr Cattell used a net to trawl the bottom of the garden pond where he keeps Koi Carp, and was devastated to pull up the limp body of the tortoise. It was thought to have fallen from a lily pad.

"I just assumed he was dead," he said. "His four legs and his head were hanging limply out of his shell while his eyes were open and just staring. He didn't move a muscle so I left him on the lawn for half an hour to see if anything would happen. He did not stir, so I buried him."

Mr Cattell dug a shallow grave because the soil had been baked hard by the heat. The following evening, Mrs Cattell was watering her plants when Tommy rose again. She said: "Out of the corner of my eye I saw the earth move and Tommy's leg came out of the ground."

Tommy's vet, Ian Jobson, said that tortoises were known to be able to survive long periods underwater. "Like other cold-blooded reptiles, they are able to quickly bury their bodies down in emergencies and switch from

aerobic metabolism to anaerobic metabolism where they can survive without oxygen. It is a form of hibernation which they do naturally every winter."

Robert Waller, chairman of the National Tortoise Club of Great Britain, said Tommy's feat was a record-breaker: "I have heard of several cases where tortoises have survived in garden ponds, but the longest I have heard of one being under water is eight or nine hours."

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When art and industry shared the same frame

John Russell Taylor advises lovers of Victorian art to head for the industrial heartlands of the North

WITH the present level of interest in Victorian art, no major public gallery with any claims to comprehensiveness can afford to be without at least a few high points of 19th-century British painting. But the best collections were put together by Victorians acquiring what was, for them, sometimes dangerously modern art.

The great period for building museums and galleries in the regions was the second half of Victoria's long reign, and very often the building was largely funded by these selfsame collectors — especially industrialists who had acquired a taste for culture. All over England (Scottish benefactors had rather different priorities), spectacular assemblages of Victorian art are to be seen in spectacular Victorian buildings.

While not forgetting London's pride, the Tate Gallery, the discriminating Victorian-fancier would do well to bend his steps northward. A sensible place to start any such pilgrimage is Merseyside, since thereabouts are two of the unmissable shrines: the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool and the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight.

The Walker, inaugurated in 1877, offers a bold classical facade to the world but, within, the art is as much crabbled and gothic as Olympian in the Lord Leighton fashion, clothing Ancient Greek mythology in splendidly Victorian raiment. Its medievalising Pre-Raphaelites include Ford Madox Brown's *The Coat of Many Colours* and Rossetti's huge *Dante's Dream*. There are also two of the most famous Victorian story-paintings, Yeames's *And When Did You Last See Your Father?* and Poynter's *Faithful Unto Death*.

Although the Lady Lever Art Gallery, in a frilly classical style, was not opened



until 1922, its contents are primarily Victorian: the masterpieces include Holman Hunt's *The Scapegoat* and *May Morning on Magdalen Tower*, Millais's *Sir Isumbras Crossing the Ford*, and Leighton's luscious *The Garden of the Hesperides*.

Not so far away, in the opposite direction, is Manchester City Art Gallery. The grim, smoke-stained classical building conveys immediately a stern sense of purpose. Inside, it has been returned to its original, long-unfashionable polychromatic self. The gallery owns a wide range of Victorian painting, from every conceivable group and school, but the best known works are Madox Brown's complex Hampstead allegory *Work*, Millais's *Autumn Leaves* and Holman Hunt's *The Hireling Shepherd*.

From here you could strike north to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, or south to Birmingham. The Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle, looking from most angles more like a set of Victorian business chambers than a city museum, is in many respects a

more truly regional museum than the others. Here, one hardly needs reminding that John Martin, supreme conjurer-up of gigantic biblical disasters, was a local boy; or that William Bell Scott taught and painted murals in Northumbria.

Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery is one of those slightly odd Victorian assemblages in which, originally, the Pre-Raphaelites were likely to have been tucked away somewhere beyond the stuffed animals. Now the paintings are rightly regarded as the jewel in the crown. Here, Burne-Jones is the local hero, and the number and quality of his works are truly amazing. Accompanying him are more world-famous Victorian paintings than you could shake a stick at: some by famous artists, such as Millais's *The Blind Girl* and Ford Madox Brown's *The Last of England*, but others more obscure, such as Arthur Hughes with *The Long Engagement*.

A deep southwards swoop would finish your tour on a high note, with the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum in Bournemouth. This is smaller and more quirky than the others. It occupies a cliff-top villa built at the height of late-Victorian eclecticism for the collector Sir Merton Russell-Cotes. A pity, perhaps, that he went in so much for the slightly second-rate painters of his time, such as Edwin Long and Landseer, but there is always Frith's wonderfully detailed *Ramsgate Sands* as a reward.

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 0151-207 0001; Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, 0151-645 3623; Manchester City Art Gallery, 0161-236 5244; Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 0191-233 7734; Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, 0121-235 2834; Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth, 01202 451800.

NEXT

How the discovery of knickknacks and the seaside revolutionised Victorian leisure. The world of Victorian leisure.



Holman Hunt's *The Light of the World*, at Keble College, Oxford: the artist's work shines in several museums, including The Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight

The shock of the new as rebels reject old order

WHEN Queen Victoria came to the throne in June 1837, Constable had been dead a couple of months, but Turner still had 14 years of work ahead of him. When Victoria was succeeded by Edward VII in January 1901, Leighton and Millais had been dead five years, having progressed from dangerous outsiders to being, in rapid succession, Presidents of the Royal Academy.

Sixty-four years is a long time in anyone's life, and in art it affords time for half a dozen revolutions. But not, surely, in the Victorian era, which we tend to see as solid and reliable? Actually, for most of the reign, it was none of those things. Although Victoria, through her long widowhood, became a national icon and re-emerged as a much-loved institution, we should not forget that her early years were alive with assassination threats and attempts at republican uprising.

In the same way, if art were to survive, it would have to allow the old to be replaced by the new. Turner, by any standard the most distinguished British painter active in the 1840s, was an ambiguous ally. He was immensely famous and exhibited regularly at the Academy, but people thought he was a little mad, and his later works, tending more and more to abstraction, were not understood.

Landseer, however, was understood. He rapidly became the favourite of Victoria, taught her how to draw and paint, then proceeded very profitably to travel the country painting monarchs of the glen and bloodthirsty scenes of the chase. But his dogs were cuddly and cute, and everyone loved him.

Prince Albert encouraged the painting of historical and improving murals for the Palace of Westminster,

just being rebuilt as well as education in the applied arts. He liked the crisp outlines and muted colours of the Nazarenes subsequently labelled German Pre-Raphaelites.

Of course, they could hardly be called that until the real original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had been formed and recognised. The grouping of earnest young rebels took place in 1848, with the encouragement of John Ruskin, who became the guru of Victorian art. The most important members were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Millais and William Holman Hunt. They were genuine revolutionaries, vowed to overthrowing arid academicism in the name of minute fidelity to the fact. Their art turned out to be something quite different, passing through super-realism to surrealism by the sheer mad intensity of its gaze.

Other threats to orthodoxy were coming from abroad. Ruskin and Burne-Jones became involved in a legal battle with the American Whistler. Ruskin accused him of throwing a pot of paint at the canvas, whilst he was describing was the British beginnings of Impressionism.



Turner: the old school had to be overthrown

Setting a pattern for the future

The natural designs of William Morris seem timeless, says Alan Hamilton

WHEN, in 1837, Theodore Mander, a wealthy Wolverhampton paint manufacturer, built himself a new and luxurious home on the attractive Shropshire edge of the town, he demanded nothing but the best, the most fashionable and the most up-to-date in wallpaper and fabrics.

The job went to William Morris, and today Wightwick Manor displays probably the best collection in the country of the work of a designer that remains fresh, timeless and still in demand.

Yet all is not what it seems. Since the National Trust took over Wightwick in 1937, it has continuously added to Mander's original collection of fabrics and wallhangings, and occasionally replaced those that have become worn. Morris's Leicester wallpaper in the morning room is in fact Sanderson's, c.1943; the bright nursery curtains are Habitat, 1988; and the red acanthus curtains in the drawing room are by John Lewis, 1994.

There is nothing wrong in this. It is merely proof that Morris designs, now long out of copyright, live on and are still hugely popular. Sandersons, which inherited the original wallpaper printing blocks when the firm of Morris and Co finally closed in 1939, has even occasionally hand-printed original paper. Monty Smith, the Trust's manager at Wightwick, explains the enduring Morris appeal. "His designs were a great reaction against the over-fussiness of the earlier Victorian period."

"They are based on natural

forms, but by comparison with what went before they are almost abstract, and therefore fit in with almost any period."

Wightwick is proof. The house itself is of medieval design, including a great hall, but the Morris material sits perfectly well in it.

The 17th-century chairs look as though they were meant for his fabrics, which cover them. The Morris carpets look at home on the woodblock floors and even his light fittings — among the earliest in any

private house in Britain, look right, suspended from ornate mock-medieval ceilings. The interior is not the work of Morris alone; there is delightful stained glass by Charles Kempe and a wealth of tiles by William de Morgan.

Morris was an early socialist, yet the products of his company were affordable only by the middle classes. He complained once that he had spent his life "ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich". His furnishings for the

manor are complemented by an excellent collection of pre-Raphaelite paintings and drawings. They look terrific against that wallpaper.

Wightwick Manor (National Trust), 3 miles W of Wolverhampton on A454 to Bridgnorth, up Wightwick Bank behind Mermaid Inn. Open Thurs and Sat only. 2.30-5.30. Pre-booked parties by arrangement. Wed and Thurs. Tel 01902-761108. Adults £5.00, children and students £2.50.

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William Morris: his work is still popular

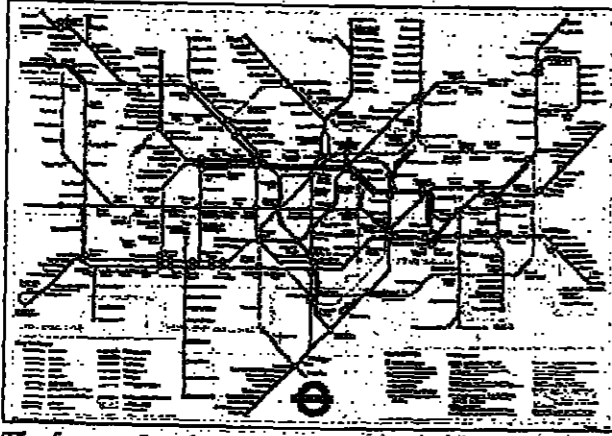
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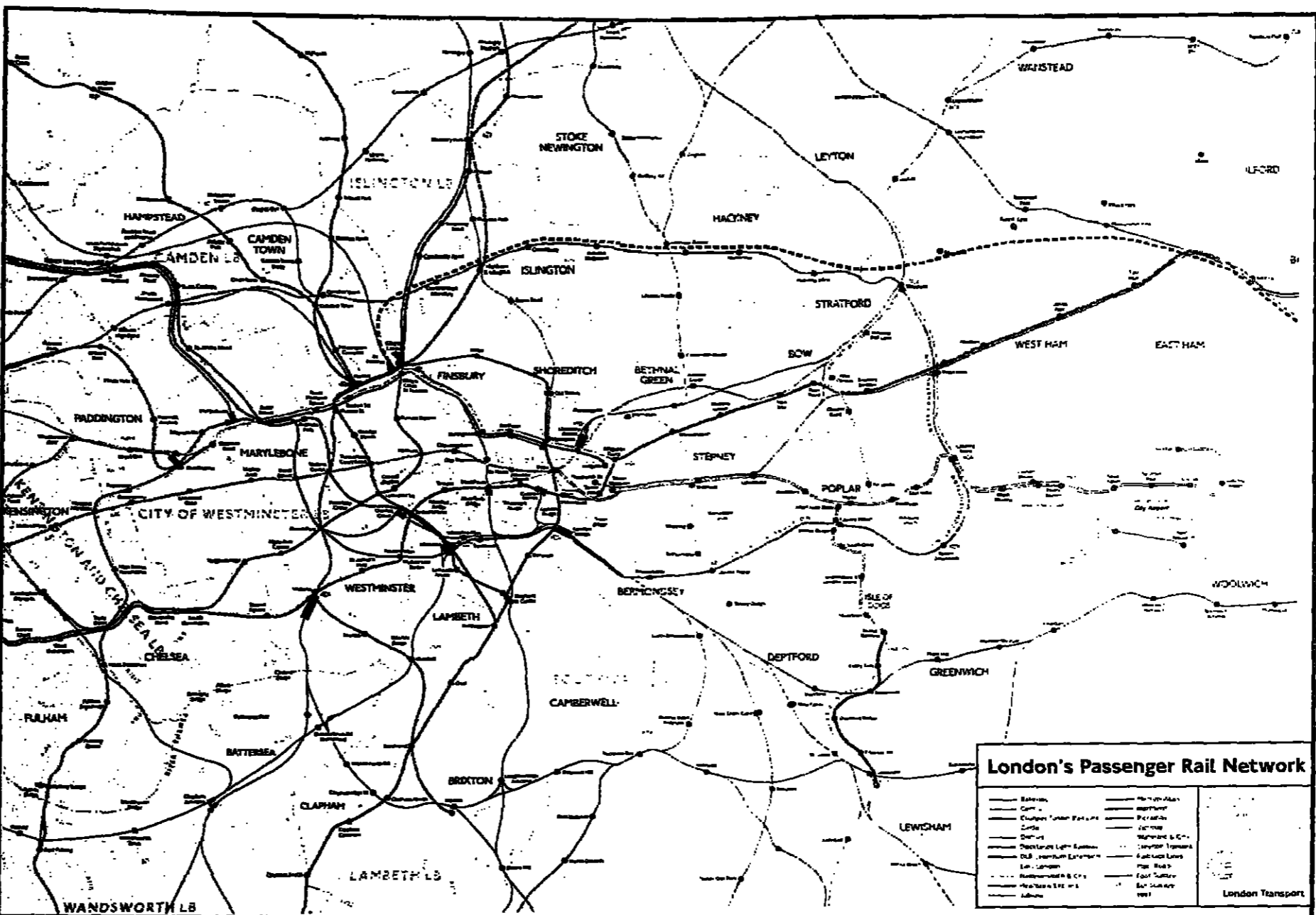
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هنا من الامم

Capital idea to put tourists on the map



The famous London Tube map designed by Harry Beck, below left, with other historic examples now superseded by the modern design of the new geographic map, right



London's Passenger Rail Network

A new concept could save visitors' plans from vanishing down the Tube, reports Arthur Leathley. It's called reality

ONE of the great tourist experiences of London may be about to change forever. A new map has been designed to try to stop visitors getting hopelessly lost on the Tube.

Life in the capital might never be the same again, for residents or for large numbers of backpackers who block carriages while seemingly orbiting the Circle Line in perpetuity. Travellers' tales of heroic explorations between, say, Bond Street and Tower Hill, will become less anguished, because

someone has actually designed a Tube map that is geographically accurate, showing how the lines relate to the city streets above. The standard, diagrammatic Tube map, created by Harry Beck in 1933, is fine for residents who are familiar with the city's layout, but daunting to novice travellers who are under the misapprehension that it bears close relation to the true layout and distances. This leads to problems for any luggage-laden visitor who thinks a gentle stroll might be a quicker way of travelling the single stop from King's Cross to Highbury and Islington, or from Baker Street to St John's Wood.

The new geographic map shows how Tube and local railway lines really thread through the capital. It will be issued in addition to the Beck map. Jon Willis, London Transport's head of strategy and planning, said they had been inundated with requests for copies of the geographic maps, originally produced for those in the planning or transport sectors.

"People find them absolutely fascinating, so we decided to try a print run and see how it goes," said Mr Willis. He swears by the conventional map as the simplest way of checking connections, but he acknowledges that first-time visitors can be baffled by trying to reconcile it with an A-Z street guide.

The new idea was welcomed at the weekend by some of the foot-sore wanderers in London. Barbara Wharram, from Tanzania, said: "It's straightforward and helps to put things in perspective. The old map is very clear but it sometimes is difficult to relate stations to real places."

The new map is the latest successor to intricate illustrations that once depicted the most convenient Underground stations for visiting the theatre, museums or the winter sales. Some of the most colourful became highly prized worldwide, especially those created by the cartographer Macdonald Gill. His 1915 depiction of the Strand is one of the early scaled Tube maps of the West End, decorated with motifs from the world of theatre. Gill's incredibly detailed "Peter Pan Map of Kensington Gardens" published in 1923, contains a host of scenes depicting Tinkerbell, Wendy and Captain Hook, with the soothing words: "The London Underground Company would simply love to hear that by losing your train you did also lose your heart upon studying their Peter Pan Map of Kensington Gardens."

London hosts Olympiad of mind games

By RORY CARROLL

MORE than 2,000 competitors, including draughts players from Mongolia and a Scrabble team from Kenya, will be in London this week for the first Mind Sports Olympiad. Medals will be at stake in 36 tests of mental agility. The usual Olympic rituals of drug tests, false starts and agonising injuries are not expected during the events, not all of which will be familiar to Britons. Alongside chess, backgammon, bridge, speed-reading and jigsaw puzzles will be skat, a German card game, and fanorona, an ancient draughts-style game from Madagascar.

Dominic O'Brien, the world memory champion who can recall a shuffled pack of cards in 38.2 seconds, is hoping to take gold in the memory skills race, and the first world IQ champion will be crowned in a competition endorsed by Mensa. The Documentationathlon will test all-round mental skills in bridge, chess, creative thinking, memory, draughts, Go, IQ, Mastermind, mental calculations and Othello.

Gold, silver and bronze medals will be at stake, as well as a £100,000 prize fund and several Concorde tickets. Organisers of the event, supported by The Times and held at the Royal Festival Hall from today, hope to launch an annual competition to celebrate not just the achievements of the champions but to encourage mental agility. They claim that, contrary to popular belief, brain cells do not wither with age. "Far from dying off, the synaptic connections can be physically improved by the proper exercise of the brain," a spokeswoman said.

Playing sessions run for four hours, from 10am to 2pm or 4pm to 6pm, with entry fees from £5 to £25. Virtual games can be played by accessing an Internet site (<http://www.mindsports.co.uk/>).

Prisoners to grow plants for butterflies

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of prisoners are to take part in a project to increase the butterfly population. Inmates are to be encouraged to grow certain garden plants to attract local butterflies and boost the population of rarer breeds.

Billberry, gorse and rock rose are recommended for Channings Wood jail in Devon, to increase the population of the Green Hairstreak butterfly. The project's organiser, Jill, Duchess of Hamilton, said that other foodplants, such as native grasses, would be less aesthetically pleasing. Dahlia and aubretia plants are suggested for Frankland jail in Co Durham to provide food and nectar for the Painted Lady butterfly, garlic mustard and lavender for the Green-veined White butterfly, and wild strawberry and bramble for the Grizzled Skipper.

The Prison Service has welcomed the plan by a horticultural charity, Flora for Fauna, to involve prison staff and inmates in a pilot project of butterfly gardening. Seven jails have been selected by the charity for the scheme, which could lead to prisons selling butterfly plants.

Jill, Duchess of Hamilton, vice-president of Butterfly Conservation, said yesterday: "There are excellent horticultural units in prisons, and growing plants to attract butterflies would provide an interest for offenders. Many prisoners have wonderful farms, nurseries and gardens so they are ideal places to grow the special plants needed in each area for butterflies."

She said that the lack of foodplants meant that few butterflies now bred in gardens, though many passed through in search of nectar. Prisoners could make a significant difference to the butterflies most likely to visit this country just by growing the right plants in jail gardens.

Other establishments chosen for the project include the young offender institutions at Feltham in Middlesex and Guys Marsh in Dorset, and Ford open prison in Sussex.

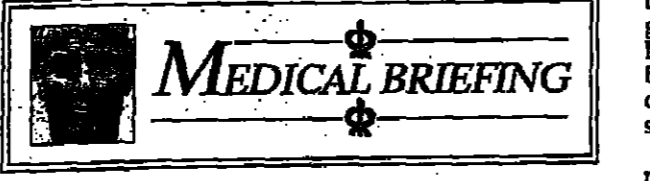
Coping with precocious puberty

A BOY aged 11 is to become Britain's youngest acknowledged father, when his 15-year-old girlfriend gives birth next January, according to a Sunday newspaper.

There have probably been similar, unreported cases. Puberty at any age after ten in a boy, or eight in a girl, is considered physiologically normal.

True precocious puberty is many times more common in girls than boys. Despite the incongruity of a boy of seven having a moustache, a beard, adolescent acne and enlarging genitalia, no specific cause is detected in four out of ten boys with precocious puberty despite extensive investigations with X-rays, MRI scanning and biochemical blood tests. Equally, no identifiable cause for early adolescence is detected in eight out of ten girls between the ages

of six and eight who have a fully developed ovarian cycle, premature breast enlargement, and body hair. Any boy under ten, or girl under eight, who shows obvious signs of adolescence needs examination so as to exclude tumours of the central nervous system, liver and genital tract, which can cause precocious puberty. Doctors divide precocious puberty into two types. In true precocious puberty, sperm are produced which are capable of fertilising, or ova which may be fertilised. Conversely, in precocious pubarche, in girls or adrenarche in boys, the secondary sexual characteristics of adolescence are present but the genital tract has not matured prematurely. As well as it being embarrassing for a child to have signs of maturity such as a beard, precocious puberty damages the patient's physical and mental development. The long bones stop growing early and the bony epiphyses



Dr Thomas Stuttford

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Hungerford remembers in silence



Town where 16 died in massacre ten years ago has rejected any commemoration service to mark the tragedy, reports Adrian Lee

THE tenth anniversary of the Hungerford massacre will pass quietly tomorrow with no memorial service in the Berkshire market town where Michael Ryan shot dead 16 people.

The overwhelming wish of the community, including relatives of the victims, was that nothing should be done to commemorate Ryan's killing spree on August 19, 1987, civic leaders said. A dedication service was held last month at the brick memorial bearing the names of the dead.

To keep the occasion private, there was no announce-

ment. Church leaders, school governors, town councillors, police and voluntary groups agonised for several weeks before it was decided that nothing should be done.

Ron Tarry, mayor of Hungerford at the time of the shootings, said: "Some people have said they wished there was a memorial service on the 19th. I have spoken informally to six or seven relatives and two wanted a service.

"I know that many of the relatives would not have attended. They do not want to be exposed again.

"We were in a very difficult position — nothing would have looked worse than just a few people turning up. We can remember the tragedy without any formal service."

The present mayor, Paul Cable, said: "There was a fairly extensive debate. But it was felt that because there has been no requirement to mark previous anniversaries, why should the tenth year be any more significant?"

The Rev Andrew Sawyer, vicar of St Lawrence's church, where funeral services for some of the victims were held, said he respected the wishes of the community. He plans to say a few words on Sunday in memory of the dead as part of his normal service. "We feel it is best not to open up old wounds."

Nothing would please the people of Hungerford more



Hungerford remembered its dead at a memorial last month. Below, the town ten years ago. Ryan shot himself after he was trapped in the school by armed police



Michael Ryan: shot dead 16 people

than the anniversary to slip by without a film crew or journalist. Ten years ago, the media swamped the town and the intrusion has not been forgotten. At the recent dedication service, several relatives left when a photographer arrived.

ITN said yesterday that it had no plans to send a team to Hungerford. "The people of Hungerford are not marking it so the feeling is that we

should not," said a spokeswoman. The BBC is screening a documentary about the massacre tomorrow evening. A BBC spokeswoman said: "We are likely to attend the press conference but, out of respect to the wishes of families, we won't be doing anything else."

To meet the demands of the media, a press conference will be held in the town on Tuesday morning at which

Mr Tarry, Mr Cable and the police will make a statement. The hope is that relatives of the dead and injured will not be bothered.

Liz Brereton, whose husband Roger, a police officer, was among Ryan's victims, said: "I will not be doing anything to mark the day and neither will my sons. Roger is in my thoughts but I will be trying to get through the day as if it is any other. There will

be no big fuss and any thought I have will be in private."

Fiona Pask, who knew Ryan and walked from her house ten years ago to see bodies in the street, remembers the crowds who flocked to Hungerford afterwards.

"It was awful. You never forget something like that but you try to push it to the back of your mind. I certainly won't be marking the tenth

anniversary in any particular way. I might have a quiet five minutes to myself, or the day might pass without me realising it. I just don't know."

There are dissenters. Kay Wainwright, whose father was killed and mother wounded, said: "Life goes on, but the tragedy should be marked in a way agreed by the relatives. Hungerford just wants to be seen as a pretty market town. I think some

people are ashamed of what happened but they can't turn back the clock by refusing to admit it happened."

Mr Cable denies that is the aim and is anxious to avoid any perceived divisions among the population of 5,000. "It was a community decision. The tragedy is part of our history, something we can't hide from. But there is more to Hungerford than Michael Ryan."

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Turtle survival at loggerheads with lager louts on Greek beach

Bright lights and rowdy British tourists are threatening nesting sites, report James Pettifer and John Carr

AN INVASION of rowdy British tourists is threatening to destroy one of the last refuges of the rare loggerhead turtle. Stretches of beach on the Greek island of Zakynthos, where the endangered species has one of its rare nesting grounds, have become the playgrounds of more than 300,000 package holidaymakers, most of them from Britain.

Piles of beer bottles, plastic chairs and other detritus from the bars, discos and tavernas now choke the shores where the turtles have congregated for thousands of years to lay their eggs. The soft eggs, buried beneath the sand, are frequently pierced by beach umbrellas, and speedboat propellers kill the pregnant mothers.

Volunteers described the spectacle of a heavily pregnant turtle trying to fight its way through beach chairs and other debris at night to lay her eggs. Many others, terrified by the noise from the beaches,

lay their eggs in the water, where they cannot hatch.

The eggs that survive face another hazard: for thousands of years the hatchlings were guided to the sea by moonlight, now bar and hotel lights mislead them. Instead of crawling towards the sea, they head for the lights and perish in the sand.

Greece is host to the last concentration of loggerhead nesting sites in the Mediterranean. Laganos, in south Zakynthos, with its five kilometres of wide, sandy beaches, is the most important. Greek and international conservationists are calling for the establishment of a marine park to save Laganos colony, where the number of nests has fallen from an average of 1,300 a year to about 500.

Lily Venizelos, president of the Mediterranean Association to Save Sea Turtles, said yesterday: "Tourism has become uncontrollable. The problem is the sheer numbers. Many of the British holiday-

makers drink a lot and, when there is a full moon, they go down to the beaches to swim and make a lot of noise.

"Local boatowners do not help the problem. They hire out boats to show the people the turtles and frighten them off. The problem could be eased if tour operators did the right job of explaining what damage is being done."

Despite laws protecting the Zakynthos habitat, which have existed since 1984, conservationists are not allowed to rope off nesting sites, or put up signs. Jill Jeffries, a member of a turtle-protection task force, said: "People are willing to co-operate, but they don't have enough information."

Corruption is a big problem and many protection laws appear to be flouted with impunity. An Athens lawyer, who was born on Zakynthos, claims to have a thick file of evidence showing that up to £2 million in privately raised funds supposedly destined for ecological organisations found its way into the pockets of local officials and business people.

According to Mrs Venizelos, two makeshift fast-food canopies were recently given permission to set up on a beach in obvious violation of the law. Repeated protests had scant effect. "For the three weeks I was there, the canopies switched off their lights late at night," she said, "but I have no doubt they switched them on again when I left. Nobody of any influence on the island cares."

Thomson Holidays denied



Loggerhead turtles have nested at Laganos, now a tourist resort, for centuries

Cars kill millions of birds on roads

TEN MILLION birds are killed on the roads each year and the annual death toll is rising, according to the British Trust for Ornithology.

Owls are particularly vulnerable, as they cannot escape cars being driven at speed. A Trust spokesman said: "Cars travelling at 50 mph are going faster than birds' natural predators. Drivers should slow down and flash their lights at birds in the road." About 50,000 badgers are

Teach young to avoid drugs, says Leah's father

Paul Betts, whose teenage daughter, Leah, died after taking Ecstasy in 1995, called for compulsory lessons in primary schools on the dangers of drugs. Mr Betts, right, of Latchingdon, Essex, who has applied to be the Government's "drugs tsar", said: "Quite a lot of primary school kids are now the offspring of today's modern drug users." His call was rejected by Paul Flynn, a Labour MP, who said that a similar idea had failed in America.



Royal Ordnance under fire

The Royal Ordnance, manufacturer of ammunition and heavy weapons, is lobbying Parliament about the difficulty of competing with overseas bidders subsidised by governments. It says that two major new contracts are vital if hundreds of jobs are to be saved and Britain is to retain its capability to produce ammunition. The firm is lobbying the MPs of constituencies with an ordnance plant.

Kept in the dark

Council workmen ripped out five old lampposts for replacement in Church Road, Gosforth, Newcastle, just a week after another team had repainted them. Among the road's irritated residents is Bill Dodds, vice-chairman of the city's highways committee. He said: "It was a breakdown in communication." He estimates that £270 of public money was wasted.

Man crushed at tug-of-war

A man died when he was crushed under the wheels of a lorry being used in a tug-of-war contest. Graham Hamlett, 57, of Farect, Cambridgeshire, stumbled as a pub team competed against the lorry. Police said: "The articulated lorry tractor unit was being pulled with a rope when a man was somehow run over by the wheels." Environmental health officials have begun an investigation.

Land-speed record attempt

Colin Fallows, 47, an engineer from Hartwell, Northamptonshire, hopes to break the British land-speed record tomorrow on a runway at Elvington, North Yorkshire. The 259mph record was set by Richard Noble in 1980. Mr Fallows set an unofficial record last year when he averaged 266mph in a Vampire dragster powered by a jet engine from a Red Arrows Gnat trainer aeroplane.

Golfer's full-toss feat

A golfer hit his first hole-in-one with a shot that went in full-toss. The golf magazine *Fore!* said such shots comprised only 1 per cent of all holes-in-one. Martin Walton, 45, hit the shot on a 170-yard par three at the Pike Fold club in Manchester.

USPGA, page 25

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Warlord plots Taleban's downfall

THE Afghan guerrilla chief, Ahmed Shah Masood, who has orchestrated the anti-Taleban alliance, first went into battle against the Russian Army when he was 26 years old.

As the first Soviet tanks rumbled down the Salang Highway into Kabul on Boxing Day 1979, General Masood slipped into the hills of his native Panjshir Valley to launch a jihad against the infidel invader.

Backed by a growing band of Mujahidin fighters, General Masood fought off five Soviet campaigns to break him. All failed. Moscow threw 115,000 men against him without a hope of success. Rusting hulks of Soviet tanks are still dotted all over the Panjshir — a lasting reminder of Moscow's folly.

The son of an Afghan Army officer, General Masood studied engineering at Kabul University where he met many of the characters who were to become key figures in Afghanistan's tragedy.

There he was also exposed to the competing ideologies of Islamic nationalism and Soviet communism that would launch the country's darkest age of bloodshed and waste.

A deeply religious man,



General Masood, who halted Russia, is now thwarting the mullahs, Michael Dynes reports from the Panjshir Valley

married with five children. General Masood is revered by his fighters as a sort of Robin Hood of the Hindu Kush. He sleeps little. When he is not touring the front or cajoling his commanders, he reads. Military strategists, particularly Napoleon, de Gaulle and Giap, are his favourites. Now the nemesis of the Soviet Union has turned his wrath against the mullahs from the south.

Afghanistan has never witnessed anything quite like Taleban. Literally, the name means student, whose traditional role was to study and bring the word of Muhammad to the people. In this capacity Taleban had been a feature of Afghan society for centuries.

But the new school of Taleban, founded by Mullah Muhammad Omar, the movement's reclusive one-eyed leader in Kandahar, is something quite different. His ultra-conservative version of

Islam is backed by a highly trained, well equipped militant militia, which has large-scale covert support from Pakistan.

Mullah Omar has tried to haul Afghanistan back into the 7th century. A new era of brutality engulfed the country as Taleban sought to create the world's purest Islamic state.

Men have been ordered to grow beards and are jailed if they are not long enough. Thieves' hands and feet are cut off in public. Music, dancing and picnics have been banned as un-Islamic.

Television sets and stereos are ritually hanged in public squares. Women are forced to conform to strict Islamic codes of dress and are banned from attending schools or universities.

Like other messianic movements in history, Taleban believes it alone is in possession of holy truth. Taleban's fighters are convinced that

they are the sole guardians of that truth.

Such unshakeable conviction has turned them into fanatical fighters. But like British and Russians before them, the Pakistani-backed Taleban found that they had bitten off more than they could chew in their attempts to conquer the country.

After initial successes they have been beaten back with heavy losses and are now facing dissent within their own ranks.

In an interview with *The Times* at his home in the Panjshir Valley, General Masood said: "We have deliberately engaged the enemy on several fronts to weaken him. In my opinion, the Taleban are now in a defensive position."

General Masood said that he could have stormed the gates of Kabul on several occasions during the past ten months. But he did not want to take the capital until he had built a nationwide consensus behind him. That process is almost complete and it is now time to bring the fighting into the heartland of the Taleban stronghold, he said. His forces, it is claimed, have four times the firepower now than when they were pushed out of Kabul last September.



General Masood, the anti-Taleban leader, talks with his commanders at a command post 40 miles from Kabul

Sword of the mullahs loses faith in itself

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN KALAKAN

TALEBAN armour and artillery pounded the frontline positions of Ahmed Shah Masood around the mud-walled village of Kalakan over the weekend, but failed to dent the defences held by the anti-Taleban alliance for the past four weeks.

A relentless barrage of shells and mortars fell out of the sky around the battered mud-brick fortress held by Commander Bismillah Khan, whose fighters took refuge in trenches, wells and mud huts, emerging several hours later, shaken but without casualties.

Three of the Northern Alliance's vintage MiG 21 bombers strafed Taleban positions in the village of Hussein Kot and the Shakar Dara Heights, some 12 miles north of Kabul, leaving a trail of smoking plumes running across the horizon.

General Masood's Tajik fighters returned the barrage yesterday, concentrating their fire on Taleban tank and infantry positions across the Shakar Dara Heights, which could be heard reverberating all over the Shomali Valley from Kabul to the Hindu Kush.

Morale among General Masood's commanders and fighters along the Old Road into Kabul appears to be buoyant. Tanks, multiple-barrelled rocket launchers and artillery pieces are being repaired, fine-tuned and positioned for what is widely thought to be an imminent assault on the gates of the capital, Kabul.

Seven attempts by the Taleban to break through the Northern Alliance's front lines over the past ten days, including a ferocious battle last week when villagers said it had been "raining rockets", have failed.

During an interview just behind the anti-Taleban alliance's front line, near the village of Kalakan, Commander Bismillah Khan said that the Taleban had thrown just about everything they had at the Northern Alliance and had still failed to get through.

"Before, the Taleban were good fighters," he said. "But they have disintegrated as a fighting force." He added:

"They no longer believe in what they are fighting for." The high morale of the anti-Taleban alliance contrasts with the mood in Kabul, which is growing more tense by the day, according to reports which have reached here from the city by satellite phone.

Random round-ups of the civilian population by the Taleban authorities have increased, Talib soldiers are becoming increasingly jittery, and the population is impatient for General Masood to make his move.

One Western military expert said that 30 tanks, backed by mechanised infantry and co-ordinated air assaults, would be able to punch their way through the two Taleban-controlled mountain passes which lead to Kabul in a matter of hours.

While General Masood has the tanks, he lacks the mechanised infantry, rendering his fighters vulnerable to intense Taleban shelling. Besides, he appears to be in no rush to take Kabul, preferring to bleed the Taleban forces before making his move.

A succession of bruising military defeats at Mazar-i-Sharif, Salang and the Shomali Valley has punctured Taleban's myth of military invincibility, and convinced General Masood, who has been made Defence Minister in a new anti-Taleban government, that Kabul is now within his grasp.



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Great Minds Think Viglen

Burma jails three Suu Kyi relatives

Rangoon: Three Burmese democracy supporters related to the opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, were each jailed for ten years, the Burmese Government said yesterday.

Daw Suu Kyi's cousin and close aide, Cho Aung Than, his sister, Nge Ma Ma Than, and her husband, Myint Swe, had been found guilty and sentenced under national security laws in the Insein court in Rangoon.

"Cho Aung Than, Myint Swe and Nge Ma Ma Than have been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for breaching the Unlawful Associations Act and a further seven years under the Emergency Provisions Act," a government statement said.

The three were detained in June and questioned in relation to smuggling videotapes of Daw Suu Kyi's speeches abroad. They have also been accused of being conduits for foreign funds the Government said were received by Daw Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party earlier this year, officials said.

The military regime, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), said in June that Daw Suu Kyi's party had received \$82,200 (£50,000) from two Americans working for United States agencies.

In an interview last month, Daw Suu Kyi strongly denied receiving the money. (Reuters)

Fans just can't help falling in love with Elvis

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN MEMPHIS

THOUSANDS of delirious fans wept openly as a "virtual" Elvis Presley, revived for the stage by electronic wizards, performed "live" for nearly three hours at a concert to mark the 20th anniversary of his death.

The event took place at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis on Saturday night, attended by at least 10,000 people, and must surely rank as one of the most astonishing acts of collective worship witnessed in modern America.

"Hallelujahs", in fact, rent the air when Lisa Marie Presley, Elvis's daughter and only child, made a shy appearance on stage halfway through the proceedings, accompanied by her mother, Priscilla Presley. All that was missing was the cry from blind men that they could see again or the sight of the lame turning car wheels.

The concert, the brainchild of Todd Morgan, creative director of Elvis Presley Enterprises, centred on footage from several Elvis performances projected onto a giant screen.

Displaying the precision of the best brain surgeons, a team of acoustic technicians had picked the film clips clean of all sound except for that of Elvis's own voice, which then sang to the accompaniment of a live orchestra. The cutting and pasting of the film was equally masterful, with Elvis shown to banter with his musicians, flirt with the crowd and even go through several lurid changes of costume.

The perfection of its execution ensured that the evening's entertainment was more than just a schmaltzy son et lumière show for the Elvis-obsessed: as kitsch drama, it will rarely be equalled; as a simulation of a "gig", it was peerless.

The delicious shiver sent through the audience by *Heartbreak Hotel*, for example, was just as it used to be when Elvis was alive, and the night ended, as his concerts always did, with a syrupy

Friedberg. Hundreds of fans in this small central German town, where Elvis Presley did his military service, commemorated the 20th anniversary of his death with a concert and a torchlight parade in the neighbouring town of Bad Nauheim.

Elvis spent 17 months in Friedberg between October 1958 and March 1960 as a GI. Local officials remained part of its main street after him. (AFP)

rendition of *Can't Help Falling in Love*. The event's title, "Elvis in Concert '97", served to inflate the illusion of a comeback by the "King" of rock'n'roll.

The true live music, too, was a titanic feat of organisation. Along with the entire Memphis Symphony Orchestra, the organisers had also assembled a large cast of Elvis's old accompanying musicians.

Now much stouter of body and greayer of hair than they used to be, their skills were still impressively intact. They included: the Jordanaires, the backing vocalists on his earliest tracks; the Imperials, his famed TCB Band, including James Burton, Glen Hardin, Jerry Scheff and Ronnie Tutt; Scotty Moore, the guitarist; and D.J. Fontana; and, finally, the Sweet Inspirations, a honky-tonk quartet of black female vocalists. The audience was also worked over by Sammy Shore and Jackie Kahane, the two warm-up comedians Elvis employed for many of his concerts.

The most emotional moments came when the two Presley women, Priscilla and Lisa Marie, appeared together on stage, both dressed in mourning black. Mother and daughter have had their differences, so their on-stage embrace triggered a lachrymose tumult in the audience. "I can think of no greater way to pay tribute to Elvis Presley,"

said Priscilla, stumbling through her auto-cue text as her own eyes brimmed with tears. "I only wish he could have been here. His legacy will live on for ever ... his light will never fade."

Lisa Marie, for her part, received a thunderous roar of affection. "We love you, Lisa," many shouted. "You're the King's princess," yelled others. Some, perhaps carried away by the flood of their feelings, spoke still more frankly: "We forgive you, Lisa," they shrieked, "we forgive you". That was a reference to her short-lived marriage to the pop singer Michael Jackson, who is regarded as an odious creature by the diehard Elvis sector, which felt betrayed when their King's daughter married so calamitous a commoner.

To Lisa Marie, too, went the credit for conjuring the night's tearjerking apogee, with the help once more of some friendly technicians.

At the touch of a button a screen unfurled, on which was projected a duet - *Don't Cry Daddy* - sung by her and Elvis himself. Women everywhere dabbed their eyes, as male Adam's apples bobbed with barely constrained emotion. "Don't cry, Lisa Marie," sobbed a stout lady in the seat next to mine. "Don't cry, Elvis. It'll be all right."

The concert brought a sumptuous end to a week of fun, passion and introspection in Memphis. On Friday, 30,000 Elvisians filed solemnly past the King's grave at Graceland, the Presley home now turned into an "Elvis temple". Such was their dedication that some queued for up to seven hours in the humid Tennessee night.

Each man, woman and child carried lit candles, whose light stretched like a string of pearls down the length of Elvis Presley Boulevard. Their idol may have been gaudy, a touch vulgar even, but their reverence was simple and undomated.



Carl Cassidy, above, police chief of Frost, Texas, goes through his Elvis routine at the Graceland theme park in Memphis and, below, Priscilla Presley, left, and Lisa Marie Presley at the Memphis concert commemorating the 20th anniversary of Elvis's death



Barbie joins the 'King' in gift shop frenzy

BY MICHAEL CONLON IN MEMPHIS

TWENTY years after his death, Elvis Presley is for sale never before. Eat like him? Buy the \$2 (£1.25) fried peanut butter and banana sandwich at Rockabilly's Grill near his Graceland mansion.

Dress like him? There is a

brown leather aviator's jacket with his gold-embroidered signature for \$450, or a black motorcycle jacket for \$395. Or pick up the \$5,000 Gibson six-string Elvis Signature Model acoustic guitar inlaid with his name in pearl.

Thousands of fans were in a buying frenzy at the official gift shops at the weekend.

A \$79.95 (plus tax) "Barbie Loves Elvis" doll set - she in a pink sweater and black poodle skirt, he in a gold lamé jacket - has become one of the event's top sellers.

Other merchandise ranges from a \$1,000 framed 45rpm vinyl record of *Blue Christmas* and *Santa Bring My Baby Back* to a guitar-

shaped blue plastic fly swatter at \$1.95.

There are blankets, pillows, dressing gowns, clocks and lamps with swinging Elvis legs, a range of Elvis shower gels, after-shave lotions and body powders, umbrellas, dishes, glassware, watches and crystal glasses. (Reuters)

Blacks in anti-police protest

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THOUSANDS of demonstrators, many waving lavatory plungers, marched on a police station in New York at the weekend to protest about an alleged attack on a Haitian immigrant who was said to have been sexually assaulted while in police custody.

Two policemen have been charged for assaulting Abner Louima, 30, a private security guard, with the handle of a plunger in a police station lavatory after he was arrested for disorderly conduct outside a nightclub.

At least two more officers are likely to be arrested on the basis of evidence provided by a young policeman at the 70th precinct in Brooklyn, who has been placed under special protection after speaking up against his colleagues.

Some 4,000 marchers, most of them Haitian blacks, hurled abuse at the police station on Saturday, chanting "KKK must go!" At one point the demonstrators tried to storm a police barricade and a scuffle ensued, but there were no arrests or injuries.

Mr Louima watched the protest on television from the intensive care unit of Brooklyn hospital where he is recovering from a punctured bladder and intestines. His lawyer Carl Thomas, who attended the demonstration, said Mr Louima "felt very good that people are upset about what happened and that they were making their voices heard".

Police Officers Charles Schwarz, 31, and Justin Volpe, 25, face up to 50 years in jail if convicted of aggravated sexual abuse and first-degree assault.

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Kohl's holiday message brings no sunshine in summer of gloom

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

There have been few holiday snaps of Helmut Kohl this summer. Normally one could expect pictures of the Chancellor and his wife posing with an animal — a deer, a horse or, if all else fails, a docile cow — at his Austrian retreat on the Wolfgangsee. During the holiday, such is the pattern set by almost 15 years in power, the Chancellor gives a television interview which is supposed to reassure the few Germans still at home, too poor or too busy to take their towels to the Mediterranean beaches. The interview is treated with the same kind of reverence accorded to the Queen's Christ-

mas Day message; it is supposed to keep everybody on an even keel. This year is different and the reason is plain: the Chan-

cellor is weaker, the Germans more critical of his performance, rivals hungrier than before. The mood has not been lifted by the sunshine. On the contrary, it has merely reminded the Germans that the enfeebled mark has made the usual stamping grounds, even much-loved Florida, unreasonably expensive. More Germans are sunbathing at home this summer than in any year since unification.

Herr Kohl, of course, is not blamed personally. But he is part of the mood of decline which has staggered into the holiday period. The latest opinion polls indicate that the Christian Democrats can

muster only 36 per cent of the vote, compared with 41 per cent for the opposition Social Democrats. Herr Kohl's partners, the Free Democrats, are on 5 per cent; even a slight dip would banish them from parliament. The Greens, the likely partner of the Social Democrats, are recording a high, stable vote of 10 per cent. A Red-Green alliance, in other words, could trash the Chancellor if elections were held this week.

It is not mid-term blues. The figures have been broadly the same for a year. That is why the summer gossip about a Cabinet re-

shuffle is being taken so seriously. The Post Minister, a member of the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), will see his department abolished at the end of the year; privatisation has made the ministry irrelevant.

The CSU, and in particular Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, have been using the holiday to call for an autumn reshuffle to take into account this natural wastage. The CSU needs to be compensated. But how? By making Herr Waigel the Foreign Minister at the expense of the incumbent Free Democrat, Klaus Kinkel? By merging the Fi-

nance and Economic Ministries under Herr Waigel (also costing the Free Democrats a Cabinet seat)? By making a CSU-controlled super-ministry out of Health and Social affairs (the loser would be the Chancellor's closest ally, Norbert Blum)?

If the Chancellor obliges, he will be seen to be hostage to the Bavarians. If he refuses or delays, he will come over again as indecisive. The only way he can emerge a winner is if he announces a shrunken Cabinet, disposing of several ministries with creative mergers. All the signs are that the German leader no longer has the energy for such a radical step. So, this year, the sum-

mer rumours filling the news vacuum are more destructive than usual.

Edmund Stoiber, Bavaria's Prime Minister, is calling almost weekly for a controlled two-year delay in the introduction of the euro. Herr Waigel is banging the drum for a big European budget rebate.

Christian Wulff, the Lower Saxony Christian Democrat, an outspoken critic of the Chancellor's ruling style, is touring Germany, making ambiguous remarks about the Government. All this erodes the Chancellor's authority. Party discipline is

crumbling. That is why the Chancellor's lakeside interview has fallen flat this summer. He pleaded with the Opposition to negotiate a modest set of tax cuts — this from a man who once hailed his own tax plan as the reform of the century. "If we can't do everything at once, then let us do at least a part so that the country can see a future for itself."

To those of us holidaying in our German gardens, that smacked of weakness. As a reformer, he has failed. Herr Kohl can fight the election only on his credentials as a European, and since Amsterdam those laurels look thin.

Far Right stays step ahead of the law by Internet

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN AND CHRIS FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

GERMAN neo-Nazi sympathisers, strutting in makeshift brown uniforms and barking out racist slogans, tried yesterday to demonstrate their allegiance to Rudolf Hess, Adolf Hitler's deputy. Sunday's protests — in defiance of a Constitutional Court ruling — capped a weekend of sometimes violent demonstrations in Denmark and Germany which displayed the ability of right-wing extremists to use mobile telephones and the Internet to evade strict laws against glorifying Hitler and the Nazi movement.

The German authorities are planning to tighten their already tough rules by enforcing members of outlawed groups to register at local police stations twice a day.

The occasion for the weekend protests was the tenth anniversary of the suicide of Hess while serving a life sentence in Allied imprisonment in Berlin. The far right

claims he was murdered, and so he has become a martyr for the movement.

The most successful weekend rally for the neo-Nazis was in Denmark, which has more liberal laws than Germany on far-right demonstrations.

Shouting "Sieg Heil" and waving swastika flags, they switched their rally at the last moment to the town of Koge, south of Copenhagen, to avoid a battle with anti-Nazi protesters who fought with police at the original site in the nearby cathedral city of Roskilde. Many of the neo-Nazis wore masks and carried wooden shields with portraits of Hess, chanting: "Rudolf Hess — fighter for peace."

Among those who marched was Stewart Mordant, a British-born member of the far-right Dutch Centre Party, who made a furious attack on black people. They "will try to destroy you — your best salvation is to join our struggle", he said. German neo-Nazis trying to make their way to Denmark were detained by police, as were skinheads trying to attend rallies in Brunswick, Halle and some towns in the state of Hesse.

Over the weekend at least 380 people were detained.



Nazi supporters from Germany march through Koge in Denmark to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy

though most were expected to be released today. The clashes were predictable. They occur on the Hess anniversary and German courts invariably uphold the police right to outlaw the demonstrations. Under German law it is forbidden to stir

up racial hatred, to make the Hitler salute, wear a swastika or deny publicly the existence of the Holocaust. But a border-free Europe makes it easier for extremists to slip out of the grasp of the German police. Before heading out for the weekend protests, organ-

isers told neo-Nazis to have full tanks of petrol and charged-up mobile telephones and to be ready to change the site of their protest at a moment's notice. The tips came over special telephone information lines and on the Internet.

In terms of numbers, the result was a poor one. Neo-Nazis had expected some 2,000 sympathisers to be on the move, instead the Danish demonstrators numbered about 150 and the total number of protesters in Germany probably came to about 300.

Pope is accused over rule from Rome

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

UMBERTO BOSSI, the fiery and outspoken leader of the separatist Northern League, yesterday attacked the Pope as a foreigner who bolstered the unified Italian state while blocking devolution of powers to the regions.

"This Polish Pope has invested in temporal rather than spiritual power," Signor Bossi said. He accused the Pope and the Vatican of "nationalist clericalism", adding: "We cannot continue to accept a Church centred on Rome." He compared John Paul II unfavourably to an earlier Pope, John XXIII, who came from Lombardy, the heartland of the League. He said John XXIII largely kept out of politics and confined himself to "matters of conscience", whereas John Paul II had gone out of his way to use the authority of the Church to oppose demands for regional autonomy.

The League is campaigning to create a separate north Italian state, named Padania. Although a "declaration of independence" in Venice, last year fell flat, Signor Bossi has continued to push for autonomy, staging a "referendum" earlier this year (in reality a League opinion poll) and vowing to hold Padanian elections this autumn. "We will leave Rome with a few things — the Pope, the Colosseum and the Miss Italy beauty contest," Signor Bossi said.

Serbs threaten to defend Karadzic from Nato swoop

FROM TOM WALKER IN PALE

HARDLINE Serbs have promised to shoot down any Nato helicopters involved in a snatch operation to take Radovan Karadzic. They say Western governments have seriously underestimated the support for the former leader and psychiatrist they revere as the father of the Bosnian Serb nation.

By pushing Republika Srpska's constitutional court to veto the attempt by Biljana Plavsic, the president, to dissolve parliament and stage fresh elections, Dr Karadzic seems to be approaching his last stand. For the West only his removal can free the Bosnian Serbs from political paralysis and economic catastrophe. In the way of the specialised Nato troops, now thought to be ready for an arrest operation, stands the population and the intimidating terrain of Pale, the former ski resort 2,000ft above Sarajevo, where loyalty to Dr Karadzic is fierce.

In 1995, during the Nato bombing raids which brought the Bosnian conflict to a halt, a French military jet was shot down over Pale and its inhabitants claim they are ready for action again. "Every person and child will defend him," said a government official claiming to be a good friend of Dr Karadzic.

Over brandy and thick slabs of barbecued pig, his entourage guffawed at the prospect of an airborne mission to capture The Hague's most wanted war crimes suspect. "We shot down a French Mirage, what's a few helicopters?" they said. "Hundreds will die, thousands."

Pale's attempt to be a seat of government may be risible, but officers with Nato's Stabilisation Force (Sfor) troops in Bosnia admit its hilly, heavily forested terrain

presents a major obstacle for military strategists. "The pros and cons just about balance out," said a British Army source. "Speed and good weather conditions are going to be the keys."

The Bosnian Serbs are known to have a variety of wire and heat guided missiles in Pale, but military sources say a night raid on Dr Karadzic's villa in the isolated hamlet of Gorovici would negate this threat. Sfor troops might be dropped in a day ahead of an operation, leaving helicopters vulnerable only in the "final extraction".

The blades of American Black Hawk helicopters can withstand 43mm cannon fire, and the British source said the Americans may have a new generation of super-quiet helicopters at the ready.

For the leaving government officials, however, the arrest of their mentor was unthinkable. "He's a legend, a poet," said an editor with Serb Radio and Television (SRT), which has banned its journalists from speaking to foreigners. "He will walk to heaven with steps seven miles long." In Pale, Dr Karadzic's aura stalks like a ghost over every huddled conversation. The friend said Dr Karadzic's birthplace in Dumitrov, Montenegro, was further proof of his immortality. "Some of our greatest Serb heroes have come from there. Genetically, he has to be honourable."

The reality is rather more grubby. So desperate was Dr Karadzic that the constitutional court should rule against Mrs Plavsic's move to dissolve parliament that he had one of the more moderate judges beaten up. Judge Jovo Rovic was yesterday released from hospital and said that he would hold a press conference today.

Mir hit by more docking setbacks

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S ailing Mir space station suffered a fresh setback yesterday when a computer malfunction caused the last-minute cancellation of a docking operation and cast doubts on a repair mission scheduled for this week.

In what has become a depressingly familiar pattern, mission control in Moscow said plans to dock a Progress supply vessel with Mir had been postponed until today after the ship failed to respond to commands.

"The computer aboard the Progress failed to work about three hours before redocking," said Viktor Blagov, the deputy flight director. "We are planning this procedure for tomorrow," he said.

However, his remarks mask concerns that the docking could be a serious problem. It is a repeat of a manoeuvre carried out on June 25 when the Progress vessel crashed into one of the station's modules, forcing the crew to abandon the punctured Spektr module and leaving the station with half its electrical power.

The two-man Russian relief crew, which arrived on Mir earlier this month, and the British-born NASA astronaut Michael Foale, are supposed to begin the dangerous repair work on Spektr on Wednesday, although that operation will now be delayed.

On Saturday, the returned crew of Mir, Vasil Tsibilyev and Aleksandr Lazutkin, suggested that, if it had not been for their efforts, the orbiter would have been abandoned long ago. "It has been an established tradition here in Russia to look for scapegoats," Mr Tsibilyev said.

Casanova loses his sexiness

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

GIACOMO CASANOVA, the 18th-century Venetian adventurer and Don Juan, was not the arch-seducer of legend but a scholar, diplomat and religious thinker whose reputation as a lover rests largely on his own heavily embroidered and partly fictitious account, according to new Italian studies.

Next year marks the bicentenary of Casanova's death and the revisionists are already setting out to dismantle the myth, much of which stems from Casanova's own unreliable memoirs, *My Life and Adventures*.

The more sober side of the great lady killer is presented in a play based on Casanova's own writings to be staged next month in Vienna, and in two forthcoming books: *A Night with Don Giovanni*, by Luciano Paesani, a re-evaluation of Casanova's contribution to the libretto for Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and a collection of love letters between Casanova and two of his mistresses, the actress Manon Balletti and the intellectual Elisa von der Recke. Some of the new material is based on papers



Casanova scholar and religious thinker

and fragments found at the castle at Dux, near Teplitz, in Germany, where Casanova spent the last 14 years of his life as a librarian to his patron, Count Waldstein.

Born in 1725, Casanova had attended a seminary in his youth, but was expelled for "scandalous conduct". He was always on the move, living in Rome, Paris (where he invented the national lottery), Dresden, Prague, Vienna, London, St Petersburg and his beloved Venice, where his reputation as an occult magician landed him in the dreaded dungeons beneath the

Doge's palace. He escaped, spectacularly, in 1756, only returning to La Serenissima about 20 years later to offer his services to the state inquisitors as a spy.

The emerging view is that, although his memoirs focus on his amours ("My sanguine temperament rendered me sensible to the attractions of voluptuousness"), Casanova was really a thinker and would-be statesman. His prolific writings include not only his autobiography and his famous account of his escape from prison, but also quantities of verse, a work of philosophy and a translation of *The Iliad* into Venetian. "It is true he was always in and out of women's bedrooms," said *Corriere della Sera*. "But his real vocation was as a politician and philosopher manqué."

At the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, where Casanova is being staged, Maurizio Scaparro, the playwright, said he saw Casanova as a disillusioned man. "His endless role-playing and travelling wore him out," Signor Scaparro said. "The practical business of sex did not really satisfy him at all, nor was it the central fact of his life."



Zienia Merton and Frank Finlay in the 1971 BBC series *Casanova*

WORLD IN BRIEF

More aid offered to flee Montserrat

THE volcanic island of Montserrat is one step closer to total abandonment after it was announced at the weekend that Britain is to help more residents leave the Caribbean dependency (David Adams writes). The latest move comes as scientists said that the risk of violent eruptions is greater than previously thought.

Montserrat's Chief Minister, Bertrand Osborne, said residents are being offered a voluntary exit package, including money and transportation to the neighbouring island of Antigua. Residents of several villages previously considered safe have been told to move to refugee shelters.

Denktas in boycott threat

Athens: The Turkish Cypriot leadership yesterday threatened to boycott further negotiations on the future of the divided Mediterranean island if the European Union starts accession talks with the Greek Cypriot Government. Raul Denktas, the Turkish Cypriot leader, said: "Our future decision on the Cyprus negotiating process will depend on the attitude the EU adopts at the end of 1997." Five days of UN-sponsored talks in Switzerland ended last week with both sides saying no progress had been made. (AFP)

Islam music legend dies

Lahore: Hundreds bade farewell yesterday to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, one of South Asia's greatest singers, who brought the devotional music of Islam to the West and who died aged 49 of a heart attack at a London hospital on Saturday. Khan was Pakistan's most popular musician with a career spanning three decades. His body was taken to Lahore before being flown by helicopter for burial at Faisalabad. (AP)

Beach landslide kills child

Sofia: A craggy bluff over a Black Sea beach gave way yesterday, sending earth and rocks crashing down on a beach and killing a boy aged two. The secluded beach near the town of Balchik, about 312 miles northeast of Sofia, is best reached by sea. The boy's parents, who were covered waist-deep in earth, survived. (AP)

Six die in Kenya attacks

Roadside kiosks and dozens of houses in the Kenyan port of Mombasa were set ablaze by unknown attackers linked to the killing hours earlier of five people in a village north of the city (Inigo Gilmore writes). In another village, a sixth person was shot dead by the police. The attacks are believed to be related to increasing political tensions in the country.

Peru rebels hold workers

At least 50 of Peru's ruthless Shining Path guerrillas are reported to have kidnapped 29 petroleum company workers, including an undetermined number of foreigners, from a seismic survey post, set up in a remote central rainforest area along the River Ene (Gabriella Gammill writes).

UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

EASY RIDER
For the fourth successive year Mick Doohan is world champion
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HARSH REALITY
Life in football's basement
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OVER AND OUT?
Is Nick Faldo facing Ryder Cup exclusion?
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TIMES SPORT

MONDAY 18 AUGUST 1997



William Funnell almost comes to grief on Gordon Good Time while trying to negotiate the Derby Bank at the British Jumping Derby at Hickstead yesterday. Horse and rider escaped uninjured. Photograph: Julian Herbert/Allsport. Report: Page 25

LYNNE TRUSS AT HICKSTEAD: PAGE 29

Ramprakash recalled to England fold

By Alan Lee, Cricket Correspondent

MARK RAMPRAKASH, the great enigma of English cricket, is back where appearances insist he belongs, but statistics beg to differ. The most elegant batsman of his generation has been recalled, at the expense of John Crawley, for the sixth Test against Australia, starting at the Oval on Thursday.

The majority of cricket-watchers, rightly supportive of Ramprakash's clear potential and charisma, will acclaim his inclusion, though it is unarguably made on a whim and a prayer. Crawley, who passed 1,000 Test runs last week in his twelfth consecutive match, has an England average almost twice as high as that of the man who replaces him.

Crawley, however, has mustered only 26 runs in the first innings of five Tests this season and is the casualty of the selectors' justifiable determination to curtail their team's habit of losing games before they reach the midway point.

If Ramprakash is the beneficiary of this move, he is also being asked to prove a lot in a very short time. A place on the tour of West Indies — against whom he has played nine of his 19 Tests — is the immediate prize that may be dependent on his response to pressure this week. His first reaction to the news was to make nought for Middlesex at Lord's yesterday.

Ramprakash's Test career was launched, amid high expectations, as long ago as 1991, when he was 21. He played all six Tests against West Indies that summer, but, in the intervening six years, has added only 13 more caps and achieved a dismal England average of 16.65. Strictly on this evidence, his fresh chance is a rare and fortunate privilege.

As David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, explained yesterday, however, it became impossible to ignore

One reason for his latest return is the conviction of the selectors that he has matured as a person. This view came most strongly from Mike Gatting, who ought to know. Gatting has shared a dressing-room with Ramprakash throughout his career and stood down from the Middlesex captaincy, in his favour, earlier this season.

It will be thought by some that Ramprakash is now a contender to succeed Michael Atherton as captain of England, but, in the short term, this is inconceivable. If Atherton does resign before the winter tour, the job could only pass to someone reasonably secure in the side, proven of temperament and likely to

achieve eminence in the dressing-room. Ramprakash has his work cut out proving his credentials as a player.

The memory of his last Test lingers disturbingly. It was in Johannesburg, late in 1995, and he made four and nought. When, in the second innings, Brian McMillan yanked his second ball, it seemed England were heading for heavy defeat. Instead, that Test was saved by Atherton's monumental 185 not out.

A single Test at the end of a losing series would doubtless not be his preferred route back but, for the moment, Ramprakash will take whatever comes in his mission to prove that his nerve really can hold firm under stress.

	Tests	Inns	No	Runs	Hst	Ave	100s	50s
Mark Ramprakash	19	33	1	533	72	16.65	0	2
John Crawley	22	35	4	1,028	112	23.26	2	7

CRAWLEY IN TESTS AGAINST AUSTRALIA THIS SUMMER				
	1st Inn	2nd Inn	Total	Average
First Test	1	-	1	1
Second Test	1	29no	30	30
Third Test	4	88	92	43.5
Fourth Test	2	72	74	37
Fifth Test	18	33	51	25.5
TOTAL	28	217	245	30.4

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MOTORCYCLING: AUSTRALIAN WINS BRITISH GRAND PRIX TO CLINCH FOURTH SUCCESSIVE 500cc WORLD TITLE

Doohan, an easy rider way out in front

JULIAN MUSCAT



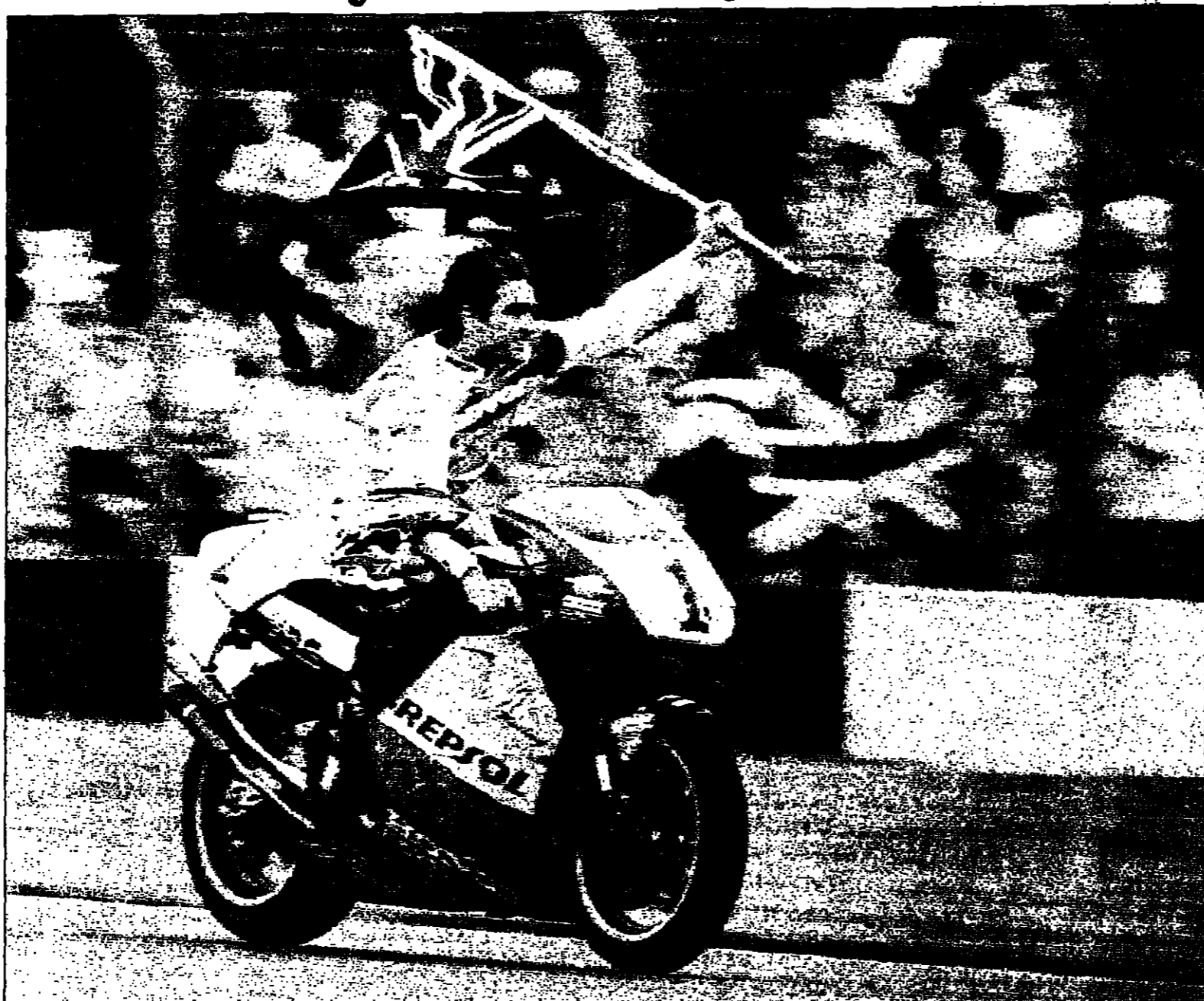
At Donington Park

THE British Grand Prix was into its closing laps, with Tadayuki Okada threatening to upstage the coronation. Winning was mathematically academic to Michael Doohan, whose hold on a fourth consecutive 500cc motorcycle world championship was all but secure. Then, seven laps from the finish, Doohan swept inside his Japanese team-mate to assume the lead. In the process triggering celebrations among 30,000 gathered at Donington Park to witness another benchmark in the Australian's remarkable career.

Victory amply demonstrated why Doohan inhabits an altitude that leaves others struggling to breathe. A mid-race spurt, showcased by a lap record, seemed to deflate Okada before he rallied to take the lead on lap 20. However, when Doohan regained the initiative, you could have staked your house on him retaining it. As he later testified: "The only way I wanted to win the championship was by winning this race. I didn't particularly enjoy winning last year's championship by finishing second in Catalunya. This is the way to do it."

The detail was important to Doohan. Never mind that he has wrapped up the championship with four races remaining; never mind that he has won ten of 11 grands prix this season, his only blemish coming in Spain, where he ran second; and never mind that he joins Mike Hailwood and Giacomo Agostini, the only men to annex four successive world championships. Doohan, like so many of his compatriots, is nothing but a hard-nosed winner.

Anyone doubting his impact should have been trackside on Thursday. All riders are beseeched by autograph hunters, but it is Doohan's they really want. His drawing of a pen in the pillion proved the signal for others to come



Flying the Australian flag, Doohan celebrates his fourth world title after winning the British Grand Prix. Photograph: Marc Aspland

forward, attracted like iron filings to a magnet. Doohan obliged for a few minutes, retreated to the sanctuary of the pit and promptly drew the shutters — otherwise he would have been there all night.

That moment was indicative of the man. Doohan, 32, is happy to talk about his career, the Repsol Honda team, his experience in ten years of grand prix racing. Stray beyond the work ethic and his expression tells you he is about to respond with a series of bland statements — which he duly delivers. Often alone at the head of the field, he is equally detached in relationships with team members.

"I am under no illusions," he said. "In the paddock, it is nothing but a business. I have no friends in there. I am there to ride a motorcycle. There are a lot of people I get along with, but that's as far as it goes." By

way of endorsing the point, Doohan dedicated this championship to the hard work of his team, before immediately jetting back to Monaco to celebrate in the Principality he has made his home.

The motorcycle circuit is a global travelling circus. The key difference is that, unlike trapeze artists, riders are asked to perform without a safety net. Doohan would testify to that: a spill in practice five years ago nearly cost him his right leg. It was

saved by Dr Claudio Costa, on hand to witness yesterday's triumph. At the time, Doohan's thoughts entertained nothing other than making the next race and the one after that.

It is remarkable, therefore, to hear him maintain that he never flinched when reunited with his bike — much less describe the new model as "one requiring careful, sensitive handling". Its smooth contours disguising an engine of brutal power, the bike bears

as much resemblance to the road user's variety as a Ferrari to a Mini Metro.

It stretches credulity to hear Doohan talking of having to "baby it along". His riding style is distinct, his moving parts almost an extension of the bike. Approaching corners, his legs snap into place with the assurance of locks on an expensive briefcase. If those around him believe him a hard taskmaster, he is simply demanding the standards he sets for himself.

"If you want to achieve anything in life, you have to put yourself under pressure to perform the best," he said. "A motorcycle is a motorcycle. There are six Hondas out there, but there only seems to be one winning."

Doohan says he will race next year — and possibly the year after — before riding off into the sunset. A lucrative offer from Yamaha, reportedly double his annual salary of \$4 million, may tempt him away from Honda, but he has no idea how he will spend his retirement. "If I did, it would be time to stop," he ventured.

When he does, one suspects it will be for good. He has thrived more on the mental demands of racing than any brazen addiction to speed. Plenty of mental challenges await him in the wider world — as he understands better than most.

Waldmann closes gap on rival

RALF WALDMANN, of Germany, moved to within six points of Tetsuya Harada, of Japan, in the world championship standings by just edging out his rival in an exciting finish to the 250cc event at Donington. Waldmann, on a Honda, went one better than last year and recorded his second victory of the season after his win in Spain.

The 125cc event was won by Valentino Rossi, of Italy, on an Aprilia after Tomomi Manako, his closest challenger, skidded off the track at the final corner. Manako gambled on cutting inside Rossi, but fell, although he remounted his Aprilia to cross the line in eighth place. Darro Barton, of Lancashire, was the leading British finisher, in fourteenth place.

CYCLING

Italians savour clean sweep

By Peter Bryan

ITALIAN riders enjoyed themselves in the Rochester International Classic yesterday when Andrea Tafi led a clean sweep of the top three places. However, although the event was Great Britain's contribution to the ten-race World Cup series, there was precious little for the host country to cheer about.

Chris Boardman crashed while Max Sciandri, despite putting in a late but spirited attack, had to content himself with sixth place. Boardman suffered his fall 44 kilometres from the finish as the tightly-bunched main group upped the pace, with seven riders going clear. Boardman was helped up, but the agony was plain to see as he tried to remount. When he finally got going again, he was minutes down on the whole field and reached Rochester among the tail-enders.

Sciandri, second in the race at Leeds last year, produced an impressive finale, 16 kilometres from the end, as he set his sights on the five riders ahead of him on the eight-kilometre finishing circuit. Tafi, Gianluca Bortolami, Andrea Ferrigato, Andrea Vazoneri and Stephane Heulot.

He had to start his pursuit by

Results 38

breaking clear from the main pack, but it was a long, hard chase and, when Sciandri's quarry finally came into view, he realised that Tafi had already made his move — and was well on his way to victory. Sciandri persisted and finally made contact on the run-in to the finish.

The chase had taken its toll

on him, however, and Ferrigato, who beat Sciandri in 1996, edged into second place, with Bortolami completing the Italian hat-trick.

Victory for Tafi was worth 100 points and lifted him from fourteenth in the competition to third overall with a total of 190 points. He is led by Rolf Sorensen, of Denmark, on 212 points, and Michele Bartoli, of Italy, with 196 points.

The Rochester race offered little in the way of excitement in the first half of a hot day in the saddle. Indeed, as the route swung south through crowded villages, officials were reporting over the race radio that speeds were slow and often as modest as 20mph.

Three hours after the start and on the approaches to Romney Marsh, the serious attack started and, from then on, there was barely a lull.

MARY PRICE won the English women's singles championship for the third time at Royal Leamington Spa on Saturday and equalled a long-standing record held by Nancie Colling and Mavis Steele, who are now senior officers of the English Women's Bowling Association.

Price, from Buckinghamshire, playing in her fifth final, dropped a full house of four to trail Jean Baker, of Derbyshire, 7-14, but fought back to take the lead for the first time at 19-18 on the 24th end, only to fall behind again, when Baker scored a double on the 25th.

A Price single on the 26th tied the scores at 20-20 and another on the 27th broke the deadlock, installing Price as only the second player to retain the title.

Bowlers, from the Vine Hotel, in Skegness, won the

triples title with a 29-3 final victory over a strong team from the City & County of Oxford club, skipped by Sue Lacey, who won the indoor fours championship last year.

Margaret Nester, Margaret Walters and Dorothy Briars had beaten the holders, Audrey Mainwaring, Greta Winstone and Irene Molyneux, who also play for the City & County of Oxford, in the semi-finals.

Yesterday, at Worthing, Neil Trundle, from Victory Park, in Stroud, won the national under-25 singles championship, beating Clive James, of Canterbury, 21-6, in the final.

Arthur Jackson, 43, from Broadway, in Worcestershire, beat Roger Dykes, of Roker Marine, 21-20 in the final of the Champion of Champions' event.

BOWLS

By David Rhys Jones

Price fights back to keep title

Ainslie loses crown after getting lost

BEN AINSLIE'S attempt to retain his European title in the Laser sailing class against a 130-strong fleet at Cascais in Portugal came to a disappointing end on Saturday when he went the wrong way in the last race and threw away a championship-winning position (Edward Gorman writes). However, while Ainslie, the Olympic silver medal-winner, finished third overall, behind Stefan Warkalla, of Germany, in second place, there was plenty to celebrate from a British point of view because the winner was Hugh Styles, from Sandwich, in Kent, who sailed a more consistent eight-race series than his more illustrious competitors.

Styles, 23, who was third in the European championships two years ago and second to Ainslie in the last Olympic trials, won only one race at Cascais, but was only out of the top ten once. It was a disappointing finish for Ainslie, who went into the last race in second place overall. The European youth title was won by Peter Walker, of Scotland.

Angry Rusedski beaten

Tennis: Greg Rusedski made an angry attack on a line judge after he lost 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 to Patrick Rafter, of Australia, in the semi-final of the Pilot Pen International tournament in New Haven, Connecticut. In the twelfth game, Rusedski was foot-faulted three times, threw the ball at the line judge — for which he received a code-of-conduct warning — and double-faulted twice. "To get called for three foot faults in one game is almost impossible," Rusedski said, "but as a professional, I should have handled it better." In the final, Rafter was to play Yevgeny Kafelnikov after his victory over Petr Korda in the other semi-final.

□ Monica Seles recovered from a shaky start to defeat Conchita Martínez 6-2, 7-6 in the semi-final of the du Maurier Open tournament in Toronto.

South Africa qualify

Football: Phil Masinga, the former Leeds United forward, scored the goal that secured qualification for the World Cup finals for the first time for South Africa. Masinga, who now plays for Bari, in Italy, scored after 14 minutes against Congo in Johannesburg. "It was a wonderful feeling to strike the ball and see it sail into the roof of the net," he said. "It was the greatest thrill of my life." The team is captained by Lucas Radebe, the Leeds defender.

Record-prize on offer

Snooker: The winner of the Embassy world championship next year will collect a cheque for £220,000, the largest prize in the history of the game. The total prize-fund of £132.3 million will also set a record. Ronnie O'Sullivan, who will no doubt be among the favourites at the Crucible, captured the first title of the 1997-98 campaign by beating Jimmy White 5-3 in the final of the Riley's Super Star International in Guangzhou, China, yesterday. It was the tenth tournament win of O'Sullivan's five-year professional career.

De Bruin apologises

Swimming: Erik de Bruin, the coach and husband of Michelle Smith, the triple Olympic champion, has been allowed entry to the European championships in Seville after apologising for assisting a false identity when accompanying Smith to doping control at the 1995 championships in Vienna. Harriet Bevan, secretary of the European Swimming League, said: "Everything has been settled. The suspicions we had about how he got accredited were confirmed. There was a kind of apology."

Britons bow out

Squash: Mark Cairns and Sue Wright, the British champions, have both slipped out at the semi-final stage of the World Games in Lahti, Finland. Cairns, 30, the world No 13, from Oxfordshire, who was the event's No 2 seed, lost 9-1, 9-3, 9-4 to David Ryan, from Dublin, who is ranked No 17. Sue Wright, the world No 4, squandered a lead of two sets to one in losing 7-3, 10-8, 9-6, 9-6, 10-8 to Sabine Schiewer, of Germany, who is ranked three places below her.

Six of best for Oxford

Rowing: City of Oxford's Eton College took advantage of their local knowledge to enjoy an excellent day with six wins at the Oxford City Regatta on Saturday. Their highest class success came for their top sculler, Richard Briscoe, in the Elite Sculls. There were 224 crews from 26 clubs racing in 44 events. The only foreign victory went to Liden, Oxford's twin town in Holland, who beat their hosts in the women's senior II eights final.

Ogle on target again

Rifle shooting: Clifford Ogle, a Northern Ireland international marksman, who works for the Belfast Water University in Scotland, won the British semi-professional title championship at Bisley on Saturday, ten years after he first took the title. Ogle, 43, a member of the Edinburgh University Alumni RC, scored 781 out of a possible 800 with 40 shots at 50 metres and 40 at 100 yards. This gave him a two-point lead over the runner-up, John Dallimore, of Torfaen RC.

Beaufort in cup double

Polo: The Beaufort squad won The Daily Telegraph Cup for the under-21 category after a 9-8 victory against the Old Berkshire in the Pony Club finals at Cowdrey Park yesterday. They won in a goal-shooting contest after the match had finished 5-5. The Beaufort also won the Rendell Cup for under-19s, beating the New Forest into second place. The Rendell-Ledner was won by the Devon and Somerset with the VWH second.

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SKY

Europeans trailing as Americans go head to head in final round of US PGA Championship

Leonard and Love shoot it out

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN MAMARONECK, NEW YORK

THE golfing gods were beckoning their fingers at Justin Leonard, the young Texan who won the Open so convincingly last month as the last round of the US PGA Championship reached its conclusion at Winged Foot Golf Club. Step this way, do what we say and you can become the first man to win the Open and the US PGA in one year since Nick Price in 1994, they seemed to be saying.

Since he grasped the Open so convincingly in the fourth round at Troon, he has grown in stature day by day. The composure he demonstrated in his speech at the prize-giving was just one example of his maturity.

Suddenly, he is putting all the hoopla concerning Tiger Woods into perspective. Leonard is a steadier golfer than Woods and, at 25, is only four years older. He is a legitimate member of the new generation of golfers who have dominated the major championships this year.

After a 65, a course record, on Saturday, Leonard was locked in competition with Davis Love III to determine the outcome of the last of the year's four major championships. He and Love had opened up a seven-stroke lead over Tom Kite, the US Ryder Cup captain, and Lee Janzen, the 1993 US Open champion.

Once again, Lee Westwood was in the forefront of Europe's challenge. The confident young man, who finished 24th in the Masters, nineteenth in the US Open and tenth at Troon, was three over par after 54 holes, ten strokes behind Love and Leonard as he left the cool of the clubhouse and walked in the extreme heat to the 1st tee.

"I think that my experience at the British Open helped me to play very well today," Leonard said on Saturday. "I felt very comfortable out there, very relaxed. That gives me confidence going into tomorrow and, having been in a similar situation with the chance to win going into the last day of a major championship, I think I'll be able to draw on that experience tomorrow."

The greater pressure is on Love, who has yet to win a major championship, as he is probably reminded every day of his life. "Justin is running on a high, he's got a lot of confidence," Love said. "I'm going to have that 'trying to win the first one' pressure. If he drives it in the middle of the fairway, he has an advantage. If I drive it in the middle of every fairway, I've got the advantage. It will come down to who can hit the best shots."

After his best round of the week, a 67, Colin Mont-

gomery had something to smile about. That score enabled him to leap from near the end of the field to eleventh, nine behind the leaders and a position from which he could finish strongly.

Winged Foot presented a fearsome challenge for all, be it in the pleasantly clear conditions of the first two days, or the blistering heat of the third. "It's the most difficult course I have ever played," Paul Azinger said.

"We started with a fairly benign course out there," Kite said. "Then, every day since, it has got progressively harder. Today, suddenly it was a bear. The greens are much, much firmer. They are significantly faster. I don't know what the difference in the Stimp meter reading from Thursday to today is, but I would say they are at least a foot and a half faster today."

It had been a good week for Thomas Bjorn, even though he complained of tiredness at the conclusion of his fourth round. "It is so tiring having to be so focused all the time," he said. Bjorn redeemed his bad third round, a 71, with a 71 yesterday. It did his morale good, enhanced his position in the Ryder Cup table and confirmed that the injured tendons in his left knee had recovered. "I had a good putter this week," Bjorn, who finished eight over par, said.

Bjorn partnered Costantino Rocca and the Italian spoiled his best efforts in the first two rounds, after which he was two under par, with rounds of 70 and 78. Rocca three-putted the 16th and 18th greens, his 70th and 72nd holes, and he was angry with himself for a long time after he had finished.

Shaun Philipson, of Prudhoe, got the most important month of his amateur career off to the best possible start yesterday when he beat Grant Thomson, of Murrayshall, to win the British mid amateur championship at Prestwick. Philipson lost a three-hole advantage over the last four holes, before eventually securing the title at the 19th when Thomson three-putted. Philipson makes his England debut in the home internationals at Burnham and Berrow in Somerset in four weeks' time.



Leonard has shown signs of increased maturity in his play at Winged Foot

DETAILS FROM MAMARONECK

United States unless stated

EARLY LEADING FINAL SCORES:
204: T. Kite 72, 73, 68, 65; J. Love 71, 74, 67, 68; M. Montgomerie 71, 74, 73, 67; L. Roberts 70, 70, 74, 68; R. Albery (Aus) 67, 77, 74, 71; 205: E. Sjöberg (Swe) 70, 74, 70, 75; 206: C. Montgomerie 72, 72, 72, 72; 209: L. Westwood 72, 72, 77, 70; S. Love 72, 68, 73, 71; 212: F. Funk 71, 74, 77, 70; 213: J. Janzen 74, 72, 75, 72; 214: C. Franco (Par) 69, 74, 75, 75; 215: M. Bradley 73, 69, 80, 73; L. Nelson 75, 70, 75, 75; V. Kiselev (Japan) 72, 73, 75, 75; 216: A. Mäkelä 71, 70, 80, 75; 217: P. Jordan 76, 70, 75, 76; K. Sutherland 73, 73, 73, 78.

COMPLETE THREE-ROUND SCORES:
203: J. Leonard 68, 70, 65; D. Love 69, 71, 63; 210: K. Sjöberg 72, 70, 69; L. Janzen 69, 67, 74; 211: S. Hoch 71, 72, 68; T. Woods 70, 74, 70; D. Daniel 70, 70, 71; F. Couples 71, 67, 73; P. McInnes 69, 69, 73; J. Stewart 70, 73, 71; F. Nobilo (NZ) 72, 73, 67; C. Montgomerie (GB) 74, 71, 67; S. McCann 74, 71, 67; B. Byron 69, 72, 73; A. Sjöberg 73, 71, 67; P. Stewart 70, 70, 72; C. Perry 68, 71, 73; S. Maruyama (Japan) 68, 70, 74; P. Blackmer 70, 68, 74; 215: T. Leonard 74, 68, 71; P. Goydos 70, 72, 71; T. Lehman 69, 72, 72; J.

Funk 69, 72, 72; J. Hoss 71, 69, 70; G. Norman (Aus) 69, 71, 74; 214: S. Appleby (Aus) 70, 70, 80; S. Eldering (Aus) 72, 70, 73; T. Trickett 73, 70, 71; H. Irwin 73, 70, 71; J. Sjöberg 72, 71, 71; N. Price (Zimb) 72, 70, 72; K. Perry 73, 68, 73; 217: S. Hoss 69, 75, 72; E. Thomson (Par) 71, 72, 72; U. Johansson (Swe) 73, 68, 73; V. Singh (Ind) 73, 66, 73; 218: D. Johnson 74, 70, 75; J. Vonnica 74, 72, 70; R. Black 76, 68, 71; B. Langer (Ger) 73, 71, 72; R. Gossens (SA) 72, 70, 74; T. Smith 71, 71, 74; J. Cook 71, 71, 64; I. Garrido (Esp) 70, 71, 75; I. Fiebert 70, 71, 71; J. Daly 66, 73, 77; P. Stankowski 68, 71, 77; 219: J. Parnevik (Swe) 76, 70, 73; J. Ogun 74, 72, 77; R. Cochran 75, 73, 72; G. Brown 70, 73, 74; S. Henniger 74, 68, 75; S. Jones 69, 73, 75; M. O'Malley 69, 73, 75; T. Borm 72, 69, 72; 220: C. Rocca 70, 70, 73; M. Calzaghe 71, 74, 73; C. Stadler 72, 72, 74; D. Martin 69, 75, 74; R. Albery (Aus) 67, 77, 74; S. McInnes 69, 75, 73; K. Sutherland 73, 73, 73; C. Franco (Par) 69, 74, 75; 220: E. Sjöberg (Swe) 70, 74, 71; Roberts 70, 70, 74; S. Lowery 72, 68, 70; 221: P. Jordan 76, 70, 75; P. Jacobson 74, 72, 75; Y. Kaseki (Japan) 72, 73, 76; L. Westwood 72, 72, 77; A. Mäkelä 71, 70, 80; 222: F. Funk 71, 74, 77; L. Nelson 76, 70, 75; M. Bradley 73, 69, 80.

Dominant Webb wins second British Open title

By PATRICIA DAVIES



Webb emotional

KARRIE WEBB killed off the Westabix Women's British Open at Sunningdale with a scintillating course record of 63, nine under par, on Saturday, and duly carried off the title for the second time in three years despite the odd glitch yesterday.

Webb's display of mastery was almost Tigeresque and the frighteningly talented 22-year-old from Queensland could afford a rosy outward half of 38, with bogeys at the 2nd, 7th and 9th, before she settled down with three birdies coming home to win by eight shots (the margin at the start) from the dogged American, Rosie Jones.

Jones sank a 20-foot birdie putt at the last to snaffle second place from Annika Sorenstam, the world No.1,

who played much more like her old self, finishing with a 67, after some recent signs of human frailty. The Swede never likes to concede defeat and she knew that she was too far back to win, starting 13 shots behind Webb, so she made a good finish her target. Sorenstam ensured that by surging out in 31 with five birdies in the first eight holes. She also birdied the 14th, to move into second place, but dove into the rough at the 18th to drop a shot and give Jones her chance.

For the fourth successive round, Webb, who led from the first day, broke par — scores of 65, 70, 63 and 71 explain her dominance — and there was really no cause for anxiety for her friends and family, who were hugging the telephone in the wee small hours at home in Ayr, the

small sugar town near

Townsville. "I'm over the moon," the new champion, whose 72-hole total of 19-under-par 269 was an Open record, said. Then she burst into tears at the presentation. "This is very special for me," she explained, "because it brings back memories of the win in 1995, which was my first tournament win. I played great golf this week, everything just clicked and fell into place."

On a calm, clammy afternoon (it rained over the closing holes), Jones birdied two of the first three holes and Webb bogeyed the 2nd, to cut the gap to five shots, but there was never any real doubt about the destination of the first prize of £82,500.

Laura Davies, who heads back to the United States this week to defend the Star Bank

LPGA Classic in Ohio, found the ideal solution to her putting woes at the 1st hole — she chipped into the hole for an eagle three. She was on her third putt of the week, a mallet-headed number of polished wood, sent to her by a company called Louisville Golf and it performed well enough to do duty in the last two rounds.

FINAL SCORES

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated
269: K. Webb (Ayr) 65, 70, 63, 71; 277: R. Jones (US) 70, 70, 66, 71; 278: A. Sorenstam (Swe) 72, 70, 69, 57; 280: B. Burton (US) 73, 69, 71, 67; 281: C. Macgregor 70, 70, 70, 71; H. Mackay 74, 69, 67, 71; 282: T. Barrett (US) 70, 72, 70, 75; W. Dineen (Aus) 74, 70, 69, 70; 283: C. Johnson (US) 71, 71, 73, 68; 284: C. Sorenstam (Swe) 71, 70, 72, 71; B. King (US) 71, 68, 70, 69; 285: A. Hennes (Lithua) 74, 70, 71; L. Webb (Par) 71, 74, 70, 70; L. Harrison (Swe) 68, 75, 71, 71; J. Weaver (US) 69, 71, 73, 72; B. Macrae (US) 72, 67, 73, 73; K. Marshall 70, 66, 73, 74; H. Dabson 73, 69, 69, 74; 286: C. H. Koch (Swe) 70, 71, 74, 68; L. Lambert (Aus) 70, 73, 73, 70; A. Dixon (Par) 71, 72, 70, 73; C. Dineen (Aus) 72, 71, 70, 73.

Davies's round of 71 did not quite live up to the start but it was a memorable day for Janice Moodie, the young Scot playing in her first event as a professional, who partnered the world No.3, Moodie started nervously with a bogey six but she had an eagle three of her own, at the 12th. She was disappointed to drop a shot at each of the last three holes but Davies was in no doubt about Moodie's potential. "She knows what she wants to do and she's going to make lots of money," Davies said.

Silvia Cavalleri, the Italian who came to Sunningdale fresh from winning the US Women's Amateur Championship, only the second European to do so, maintained her good form. She was the leading amateur with a total of 290.

Ballesteros in quandary over last cup place

John Hopkins reports on the tricky task of choosing between Faldo and Parnevik

This morning, Tom Kite will name the two men he has chosen to complete his United States team for the Ryder Cup in Spain in September. Whether Kite goes for the experience of Fred Couples, the youthful promise of Steve Stricker or the consistency of Jeff Maggert, or whether he makes the most daring choice of all and selects himself as the first playing captain in the modern, competitive Ryder Cup, the speculation will end this morning. For a while, at least, Kite will be able to sleep again.

However, for Severiano Ballesteros, the Europe captain, the pressure is increasing. Ballesteros announces his two choices in Germany on August 31 and every turn in the US PGA Championship seemed to make the situation murkier. Ballesteros has three outstanding players outside the top ten in the Ryder Cup points table who will earn places in his team as of right. They are José María Olazábal, who lies twelfth, Jesper Parnevik, who is not a member of the European

Team and has to rely on being selected by the captain, and Nick Faldo, who is 22nd. The better scenario would be for Olazábal to claw his way into a position in the top ten, leaving Ballesteros free to select Parnevik and Faldo. The worse scenario is that all three will fail to qualify and Ballesteros, who is expected to name Olazábal as one of his choices, will have to choose between Parnevik and Faldo.

In which case, whom should he pick? Costantino Rocca and Lee Westwood prefer Faldo, who has competed in ten Ryder Cups, has won more matches than he has lost, but is in faltering form this year. Ranked No.12 in the world, Faldo missed the cut in two major championships this year — something he has never done before — and his only victory in 1997 was in March. Ignacio Garrido, Ernie Els, Nick Price and Per-Ulrik Johansson opt for Parnevik, who has finished second in five tournaments in the United States and Europe this year and is ranked No.15 in the world. "Jesper would have made the American team if he were American," Els said. Garrido said: "I would pre-

fer to have to play Nick Faldo right now than Jesper." Price said: "I would go for Jesper on form. Nick is not handling the pressure well at the moment."

Early last week, Colin Montgomerie favoured Parnevik, perhaps remembering how the Swede had twice recently won tournaments by four strokes in which Montgomerie finished second. "He's the third-best European in the world," Montgomerie said. By Saturday, he had changed his mind: "Very few players can be one-up on the 1st tee and he (Faldo) is one of them. A Ryder Cup team without Nick Faldo would be a worse team."

Faldo played badly at Winged Foot and was 13 over par after 36 holes. Showing courage, Parnevik birdied two of his last four holes in the second round to make sure that he played at the weekend. On Friday night, Faldo sensed that the odds had lengthened against him. "If Seve picks me," he said, "I will go down to Valderrama a week early to practice."



FALDO'S RYDER CUP RECORD

Since his debut in 1977 Nick Faldo has not missed a Ryder Cup and has recorded 10 appearances for Great Britain and Ireland or Europe jointly with Christie O'Connor. Dai Rees was also selected for 10 matches but the 1939 match never took place.

	P	W	H	L	Pts
Overall	41	21	4	16	23
Singles	10	6	1	3	6%
Foursomes	18	9	2	5	10
Fourballs	15	6	1	8	6%

EQUESTRIANISM: LOCAL RIDER EARNS DREAM HICKSTEAD WIN AS FAVOURITE FUNNELL SETTLES FOR SECOND

Popely powers to Derby triumph

By JENNY MACARTHUR

IT MAY not have been a vintage Peugeot British Jumping Derby, but there was nothing second-rate about John Popely's win at Hickstead yesterday on Sight and Sound Bluebird. In sultry, humid conditions, the 29-year-old former computer programmer trained claimed the £24,000 first prize, the richest in British showjumping, after recording the only four-fault round over the Derby's exacting 16-fence course.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," Popely, who lives two miles from the course, said. "I feel like a kid whose dream has suddenly come true. I used to watch Schockemöhle and all the other great names winning, but I never thought I'd join them. People talk about competing at the Olympics and world championships, but all I wanted to do was jump in the Derby."

It is the richest as well as the most prestigious event Popely has won since he gave up computer programming ten years ago to concentrate full-time on horses. The Irish-bred Bluebird, by Spectrach, was bought by his mother, Anne, as a five-year-old from Nick Skelton. After numerous wins on the county show circuit in

1992 and 1993, she was included in the team for the 1994 Aachen Nations' Cup. Until yesterday, the British win in Aachen was the highlight of Popely's career.

William Funnell, the British favourite, who had thought — after second place in the Derby Trial on Friday — that this might be his year, had to settle for second place. His horse, Cornex, one of the most experienced in the field, lost fence 8b on top of the Derby Bank, the smallest on the course, and then refused at fence 13. Funnell, who was joint-fourth two years ago, was nonplussed by the refusal to losing a shoe going through the Devil's Dyke. "He's had trouble from corns all week and, when he lost the shoe, it must have been sore — I think he was brave to finish," Funnell said.

With many top European riders, including the five leading Britons, competing at the Valkenswaard Show in Holland, yesterday's event was never destined to be a vintage one, but the nature of the Derby, with its terrifying 100m drop off the Derby Bank and huge spread fences, is such that every event is absorbing and produces its share of drama. Yesterday, when only seven of the 29 starters completed

the course in 12 faults or under, was no exception.

Daniel Meech, of New Zealand, who works for Paul Schockemöhle, the German businessman who earlier this year stepped in to save Hickstead from closing, was one of the early casualties of the Bank when his horse, Future Vision, sidestepped prettily on the top, but refused to come down.

After a clutch of eliminations and "cricket" scores, three riders — Captain John Ledingham, on Kilbaha, the Irish favourite, Tim Stockdale, on Interview, and Peter Charles, the European champion, on T'Aine — raised the standard when they completed the course with eight faults — eventually sharing third place.

Popely, whose previous best result with Bluebird in the event was also eight faults, went sixth and produced a copybook round until the influential Devil's Dyke, where they faulted at the last element. "I remembered Nick Skelton's advice at my first Derby to go down on the left-hand side, but we jumped in just too boldly," Popely said.

He then had an agonising 15-hour wait while the rest of the field attempted to improve on his score. He was visibly relieved when Ledingham and Kilbaha, the winners in 1994 and 1995, surprisingly hit the sixth fence and also faulted at the last ("He was going perfectly in the practice arena — it just wasn't our day," Ledingham said.) Funnell then made his two mistakes, but it was not until Nelson Pessoa, 61, and Loro Piana Vivaldi, the winners last year, bowed out with a surprising 19 faults that Popely began to scent victory.

RESULTS: Peugeot British Derby 1. Sight and Sound Bluebird (J Popely, GB) 4 faults; 2. Cornex (W Funnell, GB) 7 equal faults; 3. Future Vision (P Charles, GB) 8 faults; 4. Interview (J Stockdale, GB) and T'Aine (P Charles, GB) 8 faults; 5. Future Grand Prix de Valenciennes (H Meech, NZ) 8 faults; 6. Top Gun (L Meech, NZ) 8 faults; 7. Duff (J Meech, NZ) 8 faults; 8. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 9. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 10. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 11. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 12. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 13. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 14. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 15. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 16. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 17. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 18. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 19. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 20. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 21. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 22. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 23. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 24. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 25. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 26. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 27. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 28. P. Skelton (GB) 8 faults; 29. P. 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Dominant Doohan stops bikes' big break

Motorcycling, at least in Great Britain, is one of the great also-rans of television sport. Each year is supposed to be the year that it breaks through to the broadcasting big-time, and each year it never quite does. A lot of people think that is Michael Doohan's fault.

That seems a little unfair on the man who won his fourth 500cc world championship at Donington Park yesterday, but that's the thing about television — it is unfair. As Barry Nutley put it on *Sunday Grandstand*: "The problem with someone being so dominant and the machinery being so dominant is that it tends to detract from interest in the sport."

Indeed it does. Yesterday, it was all the BBC could do to manage live coverage of the big race. Faced with Doohan's supremacy and the poor showing by British riders (just one in the 500cc race), the BBC has latterly concentrated its efforts on the British superbike championship, where battle resumes next weekend at Knockhill. But, as this was the British Grand Prix...

Quite who was providing the pictures for Nutley and Steve Parrish to commentate on, I have yet to ascertain. Last year, with the BBC distracted by the Olympic Games in Atlanta, it was Eurosport, the satellite channel, which acted as host broadcaster. This year, Eurosport said that it was not

them and the BBC were equally keen to distance themselves.

"I suspect our international director will show us a replay of that," Nutley said, cleverly insuring both himself and his employer should a replay of Barros shoving Abe off the track not prove forthcoming. This time, it was, but I suspect that it will be the same international director who will shoulder the blame for the astonishingly tacky build-up to the race, which featured lingering close-ups of the pillion dollies and what briefly appeared to be a beautiful bottom competition. Goodness know what Murray Walker would have made of it.

Having watched the 125cc and 250cc races in the excitable



MATTHEW BOND
TV ACTION REPLAY

company of Toby Moody and Dennis Noyes on Eurosport, the Nutley-Parrish combination sounded rather flat by comparison. That's partly because this was the BBC, which does not go in for loud shouts of "whoa" — that's the mother of all high-siders — and partly because the 500cc was the least exciting race of the day. The chequered flag, when it came, was something of a

relief, but still seemed to take Nutley by surprise. "I wonder if we'll get a victory wheeler," was how the championship moment was captured. We did not, which seemed entirely in keeping with the prevailing sense of anti-climax.

Up until then, I thought that Moody and Noyes were about as noisy as motorcycle commentary gets. Two American accents against the single Brit-

ish voice of Moody seems a curious and occasionally jarring combination for a pan-European channel, but they are chatty, enthusiastic and on site, which is three big pluses.

The big minus is the regular ad breaks, which used to blight the channel's Formula One coverage and which can take four or five laps out of the far shorter motorcycle races. All that said, Eurosport is the only channel providing live and exclusive coverage (yesterday apart of the FIM world championship).

A few minutes after Doohan had passed the finish, I discovered that Moody and Noyes are positively mute when compared to the commentary provided by Keith Huewen and

Julian Ryder for the world superbike championship on Sky. They are astonishingly noisy, a decibel level rendered all the more remarkable by the fact that, as far as I can tell, they do their commentary off monitors in London rather than track-side in Austria.

"We'll get a report from the circuit as soon as we can," Huewen shouted, providing a clue as to the gravel. Jonathan Green, the reporter who definitely was in Austria, duly obliged.

The big selling point of world superbikes, of course, is Carl Fogarty, the Brit, who, having won the morning race,

led the championship when I arrived but was second again by the time I left. He had, Huewen said, gone into a corner "hot". The result was what Parrish would have called "a high-side situation" but which on Sky merited a stereophonic "whoosh" from Huewen and Ryder.

By and large, their commentary is good, if somewhat chaotic, stuff. They finish sentences for each other, correct each other and laugh at each other's jokes. It is this last habit that occasionally introduces an annoying note of self-satisfied smugness, but that's the thing about cult commentary — it never pleases everyone. Not all the time, anyway.

The horses wear egg-cosies but it's the riders who get embarrassed on Derby day at Hickstead

Plenty of puissance but no sign of Stroller

It's not always easy to know what's going through a horse's mind, but, to judge purely by body language, there is a pretty uniform equine reaction to the famous Derby Bank (jump No 9) at Hickstead. For 37 years, it has been the same sequence of responses and it goes like this.

Wide-eyed horse gamely climbs steep slope (jump 8a), then hops over a teensy jump (8b). "What a doddle," horse thinks. "The world is a pleasant place, I'd say, and what a great view, to boot!"

Then horse takes a single, happy stride and skids dramatically to a halt, looking in astonishment down a sheer ten-foot descent. "For God's sake!" he exclaims, hooves backpedalling wildly and nostrils flaring. "What the hell is this, you lunatic? *Thelma and Louise?*"

They never change the Hickstead Derby course. It's a matter of principle and it makes good sense. You see, if those massive, frightening rails, walls and ditches were made easier over the years (like A-levels), then you couldn't judge today's riders and horses by the same standards as those of yesterday.

The only (unforeseeable) trouble with this policy is that, for someone who has not watched showjumping for about 20 years, the event encourages unhelpful feelings of nostalgia for a time when colour telly was a new invention, when Raymond Brooks-Ward was a household name and Harvey Smith turned up on Christmas specials disguised as an unlikely Santa.

You see, I remember that wide, wide wall at Hickstead! And I also remember David Broome (sniff) and Eddie Macken! Look, the Devil's Dyke! That was always so troublesome, wasn't it? Hop over the wooden pole, then down the ditch, then another pole, then a climb and a third, impossible pole. And, now I come to think of it, wasn't there a time when the mere

LYNNE TRUSS

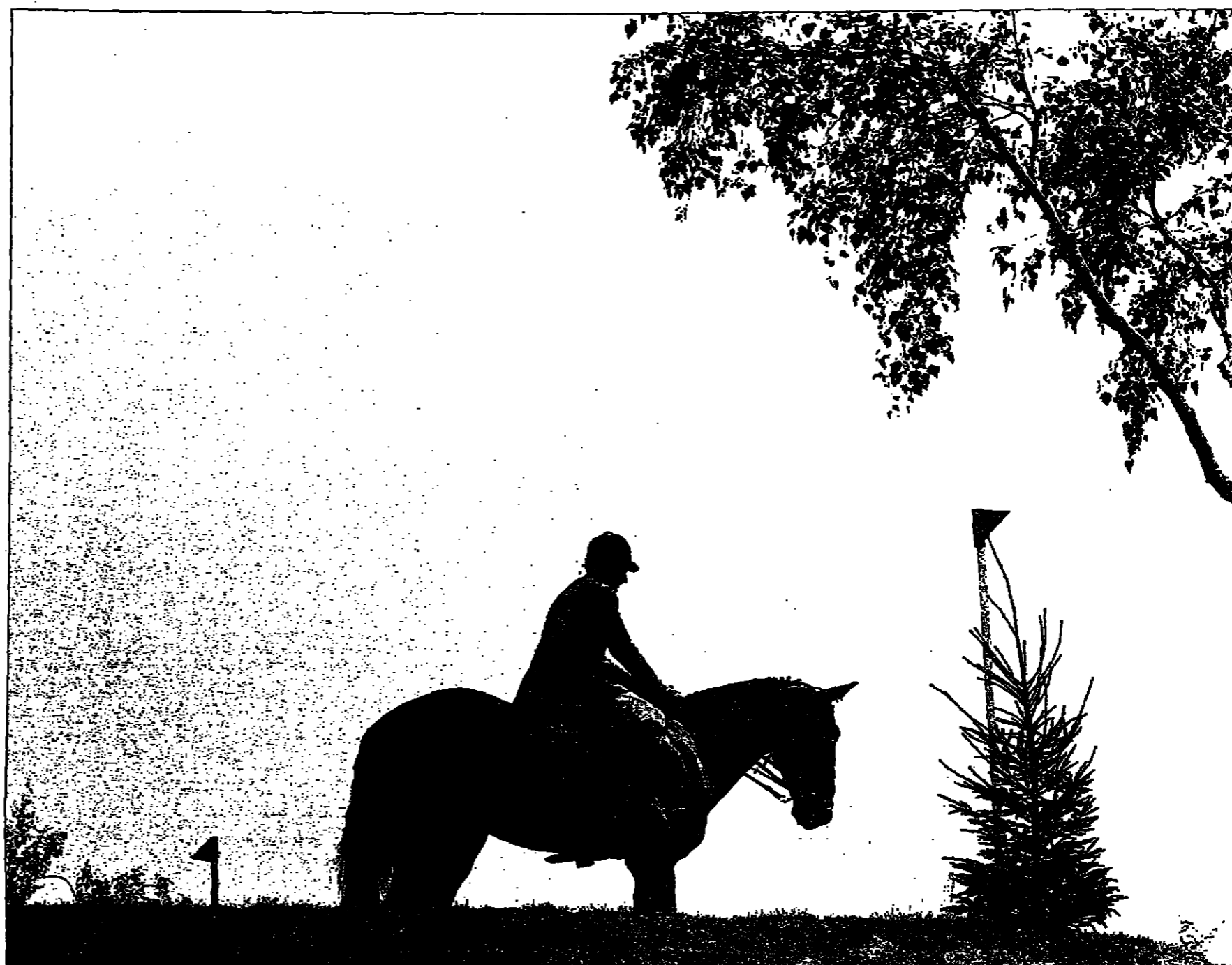


words "Marion Mould on Stroller" would reduce me to tears? Stroller! Oh, Stroller! Oh God.

New to me since those happy days is the bizarre practice of encasing the horses' ears in long, thin egg-cosies, but, apart from that, nothing appeared to have changed. The drama was the same as always. Riding sixth out of 29, John Popely went early into first place with four faults, so we all held our breath for the next hour to see if anyone would go clear and beat him. Nobody did, so he won.

The course has always been good at embarrassing the hell out of riders and lots were cruelly embarrassed yesterday, with poles down and water splashed and bums on grass, and post-Bank horses visibly changing their minds about whether jumping was really the nice career they had originally signed up for.

Because most went clear until that damn scary Bank and then — well, their capacity for saintly forgiveness was obviously a factor. That pesky Bank may have taken



Richard Barton and Just Marius prepare to descend the infamous Derby Bank at Hickstead yesterday. Photograph: Julian Herbert / Allsport

them in a variety of ways — some pivoting on the verge, some gamely sliding stiff-legged back to earth — but all, rightly, looked pained and affronted.

Future Vision, ridden by Daniel Meech, dithered so splendidly — hoof out, hoof back, yes, no, all right, no hang on, whoa — that he appeared to be doing the hokey-cokey. A disqualifying claxon put an end to his deliberations, thank goodness. I have to say, I was completely on his side.

Yes, as I said earlier, it is often quite easy to see what a horse is thinking and yesterday afternoon provided plenty of opportunity for observation. When Clover Chief threw Geoff Luckett at the third

fence, for example, he cantered off on his own, and, to the delight and astonishment of the crowd, simply refused to be caught.

It was brilliant. We horse-lovers lapped it up and didn't want it to end. We even speculated, feverishly, that, if he continued to elude everybody, the event would have to be abandoned.

Clover Chief taunted the officials in panama hats: "Catch me if you can." But, when they made a move towards his reins, it was another story. "Can't, can you?" he jeered, turning and galloping off for the umpteenth time. "OK, I'm coming in now," he promised,

trotting paddock-wards. "Fooled you!" he joshed, dodging.

In the crowd, people made encouraging "cluck-cluck" noises, but they just added to the confusion. Personally, I wanted to shout "Go, go, Clover Chief! And gallop like the wind!" — though I wonder if I'm betraying my juvenile reading habits a bit too obviously here.

If none of the leading riders or horses meant anything to me, and if the name Mister Softee rose moistly to the surface of memory, I have to say I blame the telly. How dare the BBC treat showjumping so shamefully, subtracting it from mainstream British culture?

Showjumping is exciting, and visual, and comprehensible, and

with a bit of help from the media, it breeds personalities. Plus, the horses are almost shockingly beautiful, which ought to count for something.

If showjumping's associations are with wealth, women and nobbiness, who cares? Hello! magazine noticeably manages to overcome such obstacles. Meanwhile, that almighty zizz-factory of Formula One is associated with a great deal more wealth than this.

No, by a wholly avoidable tragedy, the word "puissance" has slipped right out of common parlance. Retrieving it from the depths of memory yesterday was such an effort that I had to have a little lie-down.

Lucky I didn't go around Hickstead saying "Ah, Paul Schockemöhle, I suppose nobody remembers him?" because he's now a big cheese around here, and was announcing a new plan yesterday to add a two-day event of dressage and cross-country to the Derby event. A lot of his press conference passed me by, but I have to say I was delighted when his mobile phone interrupted him playing the *William Tell Overture*. What a fabulous choice. And whatever the horses think of it all, what a very, very nice day.

Photograph, page 23
Popely's victory, page 24
Bartle first in Scotland, page 24

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. should include a daytime telephone number.

SPORTS LETTERS

e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Problems of development

From Mr Geoffrey Stock
Sir, Cricket's proposed revamp under the MacLaurin blueprint seems to miss the point. It is the three-day or four-day county championship which best develops the skills and attitudes needed for Test cricket. The patient, disciplined building of an innings, the ability to bowl for long periods, and the stamina, both physical and mental, required to wear down the opposition, are all attained through playing in longer matches. The one-day game, on the other hand, frequently encourages unorthodox, risky or simply bad shots, as batsmen strive to maintain a given run-rate.

Yet the review recommends an increase in the one-day game at the expense of the championship, even though it is England's recent Test record which is poor.

It seems the real reason behind the new thinking is to bring back crowds. If that had been their brief, fair enough, but it was not. The declared aim was the improvement of the standard of cricket in our country and this intention has hardly been soundly interesting enough — but where do the candidates for these acad-

mies come from? The schools and clubs who foster their talented. But where are the resources to back up the efforts of the schools?

The demise in English cricket can arguably be traced to the 1980s when sports teachers in their droves withdrew the goodwill of after-school coaching on account of the greatly increased workload they were being asked to undertake. This, together with a general lack of funding and resources, led to a significant slump in both the quantity and quality of cricket coaching being undertaken in our schools.

This is the grass-roots problem that needs to be addressed. Youngsters all over the land are crying out for a real introduction to the game: they deserve a response, at primary school level, not later.

Yours sincerely,
GEOFFREY E. G. STOCK
68 Radnor Road,
Horsfield, Bristol 7.

From Mr Warren Knock
Sir, It is hardly surprising that cricket is "in danger of becoming a minor spectator sport" (report, August 6) when it is so difficult to watch county cricket. More often than not Saturday days during the season offer little more than one or two fag-ends of four-day matches, the rest having finished in three days (all weekdays — working days to most people). Very

Drunken behaviour sets a test for cricket

From Mr P. J. Kirby

Sir, As the lights went out on England's hopes of capturing the Ashes at Trent Bridge so too must have the desire of many cricket-loving watchers to return to the Test arena.

When will we ever again be able to attend a Test match and watch the play without concentration being destroyed by those who progressively get worse for drink and in turn become more noisy with their lewd behaviour and obscene outpourings?

Last Sunday, with about an hour of play left, one individual who had managed to spoil the day for hundreds of others in the William Clarke stand was finally asked to leave. With him 200-300 more could quite easily have gone.

Heat reduction

From Mr David Morgan

Sir, Athletes from all over the world struggled to compete in the sweltering heat of a Mediterranean summer during the world athletics championships in Athens. Last year the Olympics were held in the roasting temperatures of Atlanta and before that the football World Cup took place sometimes in over 100°F.

It is not time that more attention was given to not just where such sporting events are held but when? There seems to be much competition to stage international sporting events but absolutely no consideration is ever given to the

Light out of darkness

From Dr Neale Fretwell

Sir, As one of the 24,516 who sat patiently for nearly 30 minutes whilst repairs were effected to the electric lights at Pride Park stadium, Derby, last Wednesday evening, I was disappointed at the decision not to resume play after 9.30pm.

During the power failure a solitary announcement advised that repairs were in progress and that all should remain seated, implying that a restart of the game was expected. At 9.30 local radio broadcast that the referee, Uriah Rennie, in his first Premiership game, had set a deadline for the resumption of the game and that this point had arrived; therefore the game was abandoned. No formal announcement had been made at this point.

Spectators with radios had begun to leave the ground, when the floodlights resumed normal service, prompting a swift return to our seats and an expectation that the game would resume shortly. To everyone's dismay, the game was abandoned, with the stadium bathed in light and the players having only just left the pitch.

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Light out of darkness

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The officials involved seem

to have lost sight of common sense and stuck to a single inflexible decision, to avoid later accusations of dithering or incompetence from the visiting side's management. Among both sets of spectators many would have waited calmly until midnight if necessary.

David Mellor's football task force needs to address exactly this kind of issue, where the real losers are the attending supporters, many of whom have incurred increasingly large, non-refundable expenses to attend an enjoyable game, that could with a minor amount of flexibility and logic have been completed.

The regrettable evidence of supporters' frustrations were witnessed by many outside the ground as isolated incidents of sporadic violence towards small groups of Wimbledon supporters occurred.

I sincerely hope that Rennie, the police and the Football Association learn something from this evening, rather than just sweep it under the carpet and lay the blame at Derby County's door, which I suspect will be the case.

Yours sincerely,
NEALE FRETWELL
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Leicester University,
University Road,
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n5@leicester.ac.uk

This week in THE TIMES



■ Tomorrow

With the start of the Ebor meeting at York, *The Times* introduces Timekeeper, an exclusive speed ratings service, to help in the search for horse racing winners

■ Wednesday

Bosra Sham goes for glory in the Juddmonte International Stakes at York

■ Thursday

How are Irish footballers faring in the race for France and the 1998 World Cup finals?

■ Friday

Eddie Jordan talks of his plans to join the magic circle of elite teams in Formula One

Far from the glamour of Premiership football, struggling clubs are facing fight for survival

Hereford miss chance to ease the pain

MICHAEL CALVIN



sees Welling inflict yet more trauma

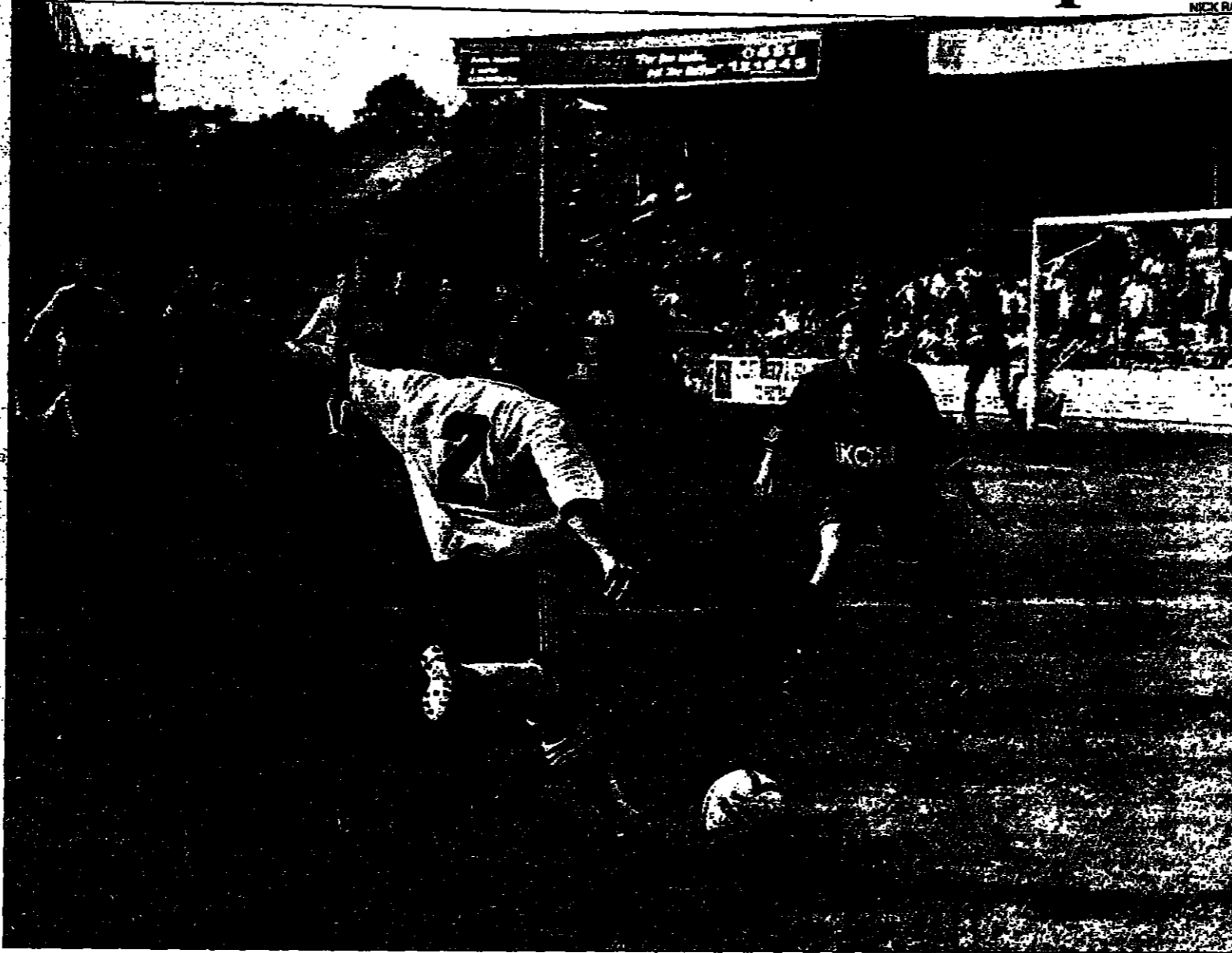
TWO new photographs adorn the wall of the boardroom at Hereford United. One depicts a man in a state of shock, through a line of riot police, who are advancing on exultant Brighton supporters. The other, taken in the dressing-room immediately after his Hereford United team had lost Football League status, is a study of collective despair.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, the sight of grown men, sprawled on benches, stripped to the waist and weeping uncontrollably represents a football fable. Yet, in Hereford's position, words are worthless. They are beyond rhetoric, beyond redemption, if the evidence of their opening Vauxhall Conference match on Saturday is to be believed.

A 2-1 home defeat by the musclebound mediocrities of Welling United maintained the pain of a uniquely traumatic summer. Turner has aged in the 107 days since Brighton survived at Hereford's expense. His face is paler, thinner. "I've never worked as hard in my life," he said with a sigh, but the intensity with which he twisted a ten-pence piece in his palm was infinitely more eloquent.

Edgar Street is the theatre of broken dreams. The managing director has resigned, along with the commercial manager. The public address announcer has been sacked for defying an order to stop playing records for fearful fans who wanted to linger in the ground on the fateful afternoon of May 3, when relegation was confirmed.

The traditional mascot, a prize bull, has been replaced by a volunteer, who risked heatstroke in a nylon outfit, complete with plastic horns. Advertisers have withdrawn their support. Life's little luxu-



Rodgerson, of Hereford United, launches a cross into the Welling United goalmouth during his club's defeat at Edgar Street on Saturday

ries, from overnight hotel accommodation to boardroom canapés, are a thing of the past. Given the need to slash £200,000 from a £900,000 annual budget, the call, predictably, involved the release of nine players.

The strain of meeting the human costs of recession shows. Turner, a decent man, has difficulty rationalising his inability to give young players time to mature. He knew he was condemning family men to uncertain futures.

"At least the old pros have been around," he reflected. "They know what's coming in this sort of situation. But, to have to do that to young lads, who've never had a start in life, is the worst feeling in the world. Well, that and taking a club out of the League."

The harsh realities of a new life are crowding in. Turner may have the only exclusively full-time squad in the Confer-

ence, but he cannot meet the wage demands of part-time prospects, who expect five-figure signing-on fees. He had to sell the leading scorer, Adrian Foster, to Keshen and Diamonds, the *nouveau riche* of non-League football.

Turner's title, director of football, encourages delusions of grandeur. He has had to

are now as important as those of a new midfield player. The culture shocks do not end there. Immediate intelligence is hard to gather on unfamiliar territory, although six scouts will be out watching Conference rivals in midweek.

The elation of the Welling players, who rushed to salute their 39 travelling fans, ahead after 208 seconds, when Paul Copley, the captain, scored with a free header, they had the match won by the 27th minute, when Mark Cooper headed a second goal after Andy deBont missed a simple free kick. Tony Agana replied 13 minutes into the second half, but the crowd, in excess of 3,000, were in no mood to be appeased. They mocked the hapless deBont and barracked Tannoy announcements concerning coach travel to tonight's match at Hednesford.

Since their dignity in adversity was a key factor in the withdrawal of Turner's letter of resignation, this was ominous. "We needed to win today," the chairman, Peter Hill, acknowledged. "We are

summed up a perennial problem. Hereford have fallen far down football's food chain, but are still a tasty snack for the envious or the ambitious.

Welling justify crude preconceptions of Conference football. They are a team of nearly-weres and never-will-be, built on a five-man defence that has the menace and

mobility of a set of doormen at a south London nightclub. They played within their considerable limitations, but deserved victory because of their durability.

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Gritt finds some home comfort against the odds

Richard Hobson finds the Brighton manager reflecting on a hard-fought draw and a series of off-field distractions

STEVE GRITT sat back in his seat at the front of the main stand, drew breath and surveyed the Priestfield Stadium. Was there anything about the ground, he was asked, that made him feel as though he had supervised a home game? "Yes, the result," Gritt replied, after much thought. "We were strong at home last season."

Having played for Charlton Athletic during their spells as tenants at Selhurst Park and Upton Park, the Brighton manager knows how to make the best of the difficulties with ground-sharing. The key, he believes, is in making the stadium in Gillingham feel like a proper "home", even though it is some 70 miles from Brighton and Hove.

That entails travelling in cars rather than a team coach, but some of his players, afraid of being caught in traffic, were kicking their heels after arriving more than an hour ahead of schedule for their first league game on Saturday. At least they knew the route. Along Gillingham Road, two men in Brighton replica shirts knocked on the door of an elderly lady to seek directions.

Once inside the stadium, however, supporters soon recreated the hateful atmosphere that pervaded the final months at the old Goldstone Ground. Cries of "Scum, scum" rang out as David Bellotti, the reviled chief executive, appeared in the directors' box and the chants became increasingly menacing. "Bellotti's going to die," was among the more savoury to follow, while his wife, sitting alongside, was also targeted.

Both the club and the police have advised Bellotti to stay away from games. Seven days earlier, travelling home on the train from the defeat at Swansea, he was ejected by police at Bridgford for his own safety because supporters had become aware of his presence.

Sammy McIlroy, the Macclesfield Town manager, has played in many an inhospitable stadium, but still described the atmosphere as one of the strangest he had known in football. "I kept looking over my shoulder in the dugout and thought something would break out at any minute," he said. But for the strong presence of the Kent Constabulary, it might well have done.

It needs stating that the sight of Bellotti does not justify intimidation. In the toilets at half-time, two men with shaven heads decided that Bellotti was the only man to blame for the crowd's failure to direct encouragement towards their team. By this argument, any fault for the Macclesfield goal lay not with the Brighton defence, but with Wood, for getting in a cross, and Landon, for shooting into the net.

"The situation is a distraction," Gritt said. "I tried to distance myself from what was going on last season, but, in some respects, I have allowed myself to be caught up in what has been going on over the summer. Perhaps it would be better if I told

people to stop telling me things until everything is done and dusted."

Bellotti will lose his post when the consortium led by Dick Knight finally takes over. Bill Archer, the present club chairman, is back from holiday this week and Knight, his successor in waiting, said on Saturday that the remaining legal issues will be resolved shortly — though, in the Brighton context, "shortly" can mean an awfully long time.

Knight was more specific on the possibility that Brighton will move "home" again, from Gillingham to Millwall, some time next month. Interested parties meet on Wednesday before the Football League management committee votes on the issue on August 28.

Brighton will have to pay around £300,000 in compensation to Gillingham, having signed an agreement for two years, but a recent poll in a local newspaper revealed 95 per cent support for a move to the New Den. In the longer term, the club hopes to be installed at a new ground in



Bellotti: police advice

Waterhall, to the north of the town, for the next century.

Slowly, then, muddied waters are becoming clearer and, under Gritt, Brighton are unlikely to come as close again to slipping into the Vauxhall Conference. They responded strongly after going behind and had chances to take the lead once he had levelled, through McDonald, after 62 minutes.

Equally, Macclesfield, promoted from the Conference last season, have enough about them to move upwards again. At times, their passing and movement was a delight.

They may prove a striker light, but, in Sodje, they possess a stylish, solid defender and a colourful character, who plays in a bandanna because his mother believes it will bring good luck. Perhaps he could lend it to Gritt.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION (4-2): M Omerod — J Humphrey, R Johnson, M Morris, G Hobson — S Stiles, J Merson (sub: P Armstrong, 82min), K Mayo (sub: J Westcott, 38), P McDonald — C Mackell, J Rensell.

MACCLESFIELD TOWN (4-2): R Price — D Trevelyan, S Poyne, W Howarth — N Sovell, S Hitchen, N Mitchell, S Wood — A Alston, R Landon (sub: P Power, 77).

Referee: P Taylor

Yeovil aristocrats celebrate in appropriate style

Walter Gammie watches one of non-League football's most famous names mark a return to the Vauxhall Conference elite with an opening-day victory

THERE was a crackle of anticipation in the treacle-thick air at Huish Park on Saturday. It was charged not just by the relief that the long-drawn rituals of pre-season skirmishing were finally over, but by an eagerness to assess whether the team will be able to scoop the substantial rewards that the Vauxhall Conference has to offer.

The Conference, reinvented as a league with a majority of clubs equipped for the Football League, is all about baring rivals out of the way to the one-team-at-a-time entrance to higher status. The prize is a big draw. A crowd of 3,602 testified to that, although supporters do not come more committed than those of Yeovil Town and Stevenage. Borough, who shaded their hosts by an average 2.881 to 2.774 as the best-supported club outside the League last season.

The home contingent was, of course, celebrating the return of one of the old aristocracy of the non-League world to the elite after two wilderness years in the Isthmian League.

One need only look up the sepia-tint image of the great FA Cup win over Sunderland in 1949 to appreciate Yeovil's place in the game.

The slope that put fear into visiting professionals was levelled for super-market trolleys and Yeovil moved to their present stadium outside the town in 1990. It was the same season Wycombe Wanderers opened Adams Park. Any easy assumption that Yeovil would swiftly take the same route to the promised land disappeared into an abyss of a £750,000 debt incurred in the move.

The club has clawed its way back to stability and John Fry, the chairman, believes the appointment of Norman Hayward, the former chairman of Bournemouth, as a director will help to give Yeovil the additional muscle to fulfil the dream that he shares with the supporters.

Stevenage, by contrast, are new

boys on the block. Founded as a parks league club in 1976, their rapid subsequent advance has been fuelled by the commitment of the local council, the ambition of Victor Green, the chairman, and the energy and acumen of Paul Fairclough, the manager. Such is his side's reputation that, after an ordinary performance in defeat against

understandingly pumped-up opponents, Fairclough was questioned as if Stevenage had just suffered a rather larger calamity.

The side he built for the League, having been barred as champions because of ground-grading rules that the club's costly court appeal has since helped to relax and then been burnt out in pursuit of Macclesfield last season, has lost a backbone of players impatient to make the leap.

Fairclough hoped to replace Barry Hayles — whose sparkling start with

Bristol Rovers surprises the Stevenage manager not one bit — with Paul Thompson, from Gateshead, only for the £15,000 signing to break his ankle and damage ligaments against Cambridge United after 70 minutes and "two superb goals" of pre-season football.

The experienced Corey Browne walked out last Thursday to join Slough Town and Fairclough said: "I spent most of last week trying to find forwards. I have spent only £12,000 in six years previously, but £30,000 already this season. The likes of Hayles were found on street corners and needed a year before they were ready. We have got players coming through our youth scheme, but they will need another year. So, I will have to buy again."

The burden on Saturday fell on Neil Trebble, who worked manfully and crafted himself the space to angle

a fine equalising goal past Pennock just after half-time. Yeovil, meanwhile, revelled in the return to form and fitness of Patmore, whose challenge upon Gallagher created a simple opening goal for Pickard. A £15,000 signing from Dorchester Town, in the 24th minute, Patmore then crashed in a far-post header in the 76th minute after Engwell had tormented Marshall on the left to provoke a small pitch invasion from ebullient supporters.

"All credit to Graham Roberts, the manager," Fry said. "He runs the side very professionally. In fact, we might be semi-professionals, but I know we are a lot more professional than many of the clubs in the League at the moment." It is the small matter of who will get the chance to prove it that promises an absorbing nine months to come.

YEovil, TOWN (2-2): A Pennock — A J Harrington, R Gowers, C Webb — Harvey, C Fielder, S Browne (sub: S Wimbey, 81min), S Wimbey (sub: G Kemp, 45), S Wimbey (sub: G Kemp, 45).

STEVENAGE BOROUGH (2-2): D Gallagher — R Kirby, W Kelly, R Tison — R Marshall, J Sargent, M Smith, S Berritt, J March — N Trebble, R Sampson (sub: E Edd, 56).

Referee: L Cable

Dunfermline revel in Celtic's confusion

Football matches have a habit of kicking refined concepts to pieces. With a 2-1 victory on Saturday, Dunfermline Athletic put the boot into Celtic's cosmopolitan plans. After that result on their own ground, Celtic are now bottom of the Bell's Scottish League premier division, having been beaten in each of their first two matches. Even at this stage, the handicaps is severe.

Two seasons ago, Celtic lost only once in their entire league programme, yet still saw Rangers take the title. Now, in mid-August, they have already been overcome by Hibernian and Dunfermline, who had been viewed as candidates for relegation. Saturday's result infuriated supporters, but an invigorating rage was at least more pleasurable than the debilitating melancholy that is now settling over them.

Over the course of the summer, Celtic set in place a fresh strategy. Responsibilities would be divided between a general manager and a head coach. In addition, the latter

post was given to a figure well-versed in the more enlightened ways of continental football — Wim Jansen, of Holland.

The whole approach has obvious benefits and it might even prove to be effective one day, but so far there has been only steep decline at Celtic. Theories of organisational structure matter less than the ability to put effective footballers on the field. Some will regard Bert Paton and his assistant at Dunfermline, Dick Campbell, as representatives of the horny-handed tradition in management, but it was their team that won.

A muddle of refereeing decisions produced clear justice, with Dunfermline, who had been denied one certain penalty, later finding themselves presented with a far more dubious award, which Hamish French converted to win the match. The points were not pilfered, since Dunfermline ought to have scored on two or three other occasions.

Jansen's team were always vulnerable to the counter-

KEVIN MCCARRA



Scottish commentary

attack once David Bingham's equaliser had reduced them to recklessness. Celtic were in a panic then and tore themselves to pieces, with all thought of pattern abandoned as players resorted to rash individualism. "They ran out of the shape," Jansen said of the formless mess that he had seen.

He was right, but it will take more than a few stiff training sessions to repair Celtic. Although the head coach has been alarmingly incapable of exerting any influence on events at his strange, new club, he is also hampered by a shortage of excellence. Celtic's

signing policy invites criticism, although not through the thoughtless claim that the club has been miserly.

The reverse is the case. Given that almost a whole new ground has also been built, the outlay of £19 million in the transfer market over the past three years is astonishing. The real failure may lie in the squandering of cash on a plethora of respectable tradesmen who are not quite capable of coping with the heightened demands that they face at Celtic. Now, standards that were already unsatisfactory are slipping further.

The club has shown prudence in its sales, but the proceeds have not been spent on men of comparable talent. Pierre van Hooijdonk was transferred for £3 million and Celtic should raise as much when they off-load Jorge Cadete, but Tommy Johnson and Darren Jackson, the forwards signed to replace them, will never score as many goals as their predecessors.

While Jock Brown, the general manager, did handsome business in securing £3 mil-

lion and Regi Blinker from Sheffield Wednesday in return for Paolo di Canio, he must now buy someone who can supply the panache that once flowed from the Italian. Celtic require newcomers who will excite the crowd and scare the opposition.

While those supporters contemplated their lowly station, a fixture of consequence occurred at Tannadice yesterday, where Dundee United drew 1-1 with Hibernian. The home team took the lead after 22 minutes, through Robbie Winters.

United seemed to have weathered the dismissal of Maurice Malpas until a free kick, in the 77th minute, was harshly awarded against St Johnstone, their goalkeeper, for time-wasting. Chic Charnley rolled the ball sideways and Paul Tosh, a substitute, forced home a shot through a chunk in the congested area. Hibernian join St Johnstone at the top of the table and the premier division, usually rebooked for its predictability, has acquired an appealingly rogues' air.

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CRICKET

Stewart role keeps England selectors shuffling the pack

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

IN THEIR anxiety to reinforce a batting unit that has consistently failed them, the England selectors have produced a team for the final Test against Australia that is guaranteed to confuse their followers. Mark Butcher, has been recalled after one match of exile, while the teenage wonder, Ben Hollis, will drop out after a single cap. His brother, Adam, slips out of the top six, where he is demonstrably qualified to bat. And all of this relates to indecision over the appropriate role for Alec Stewart.

Every selection meeting seems to start with Alec Stewart, the chairman, said yesterday. Most probably finish with him, too, the balance of the side being utterly decided by Stewart's position within it. It is a compliment to him, and an undoubted privilege. There are times, though, when it is also a millstone.

On his home patch, at the Oval, Stewart will revert to No 3, a decision that will be seen as a truce to his abandonment of his return to opening. "It was only ever a short-term thing," Graveney said. "Maybe so, but as it means that only two of the top seven will occupy the positions that they held at Trent Bridge, it must be received with a measure of scepticism."

Graveney reports that the debate on Saturday evening occupied close to three hours. Much of it concerned Stewart, where he should bat and whether he should continue keeping wicket. The latter point was only decided after protracted consideration of restoring Jack Russell, a course I would firmly have favoured.

I believe the selectors were divided over the extent of Stewart's responsibilities but unanimous that he could not keep wicket again if he went in first. As this is an admission that his wicketkeeping has deteriorated through the summer, they should have relieved him of it.

Russell continues to make

consistent scores for Gloucestershire, and his wicket-keeping, by the common consent of his peers, remains on a different level to his rivals. For too long, he has been harshly restricted by the inability of England to uncover an all-rounder; there is now a clear case for saying that he fits the bill himself.

Certainly, it would be a tragedy if anyone else was selected as second wicket-keeper for the tour of the West Indies, where Russell should finally achieve the fifth cap for which he has now waited more than 12 months.

The desire of the selectors to strengthen the batting is understandable, whatever the merits of their methods. Since the increasingly implausible victory at Edgbaston, England

he was by his omission. He deserves another opportunity, though no more than Steve James, who continues to blaze a trail for Glamorgan and deserves an initial chance.

Caringly, Graveney did not telephone James yesterday, fearing that a call from him would raise hopes that a few seconds of conversation would dash. He intends, instead, to return to Worcester today to speak privately with him. Plainly, he has a good chance of touring this winter.

The most deflating news brought to the selection table was the breakdown of Darren Gough. Forced to miss the Trent Bridge Test by recurrent pains in his left knee, Gough was hopeful of returning at the Oval but suffered a setback when he tried to bowl in the nets on Friday.

To lose Gough for two Tests and Dominic Cork for the whole summer is a hefty blow to our bowling resources. Graveney said, "Gough plainly has time on his side, but with this type of injury, we have to be concerned about him for the winter."

In the light of this, Devon Malcolm was set for another reprieve anyway, but his ten wickets at Derby on Saturday will have been a timely boost to his self-esteem. Dean Headley is missing Kent's match against the Australians with a sore heel and Peter Martin is included in the party to cover for him.

Ben Hollis will remain with the side, Surrey having no game, and his all-round contributions to the present championship game at Lord's indicate that his Test initiation did him no harm. He has a big future; it must be handled correctly.

The final place in England's XI will see another change. Although Robert Croft remains in the party, he will now give way to Philip Tufnell, who has not played since the tour of New Zealand. Croft has had a disappointing week; his reaction will gauge his strength of character.

SQUAD

Player	County	Age	Tests
A. Atherton	(Lancs, capt)	29	72
M. A. Butler	(Surrey)	28	14
A. J. Cook	(Surrey)	28	15
R. D. B. Croft	(Gloucestershire)	27	10
B. C. Dooland	(Kent)	27	10
B. C. Dooland	(Kent)	27	10
A. J. Hoggard	(Surrey)	26	1
D. E. Malcott	(Derbyshire)	26	1
P. J. Martin	(Lancashire)	26	1
M. A. Morgan	(Surrey)	26	1
A. J. Stewart	(Surrey)	26	1
S. P. Thompson	(Surrey)	26	1
P. R. Tufnell	(Middlesex)	31	27

have conceded thumping first-innings deficits in every game. John Crawley has finally suffered the consequences of this, but others are scarcely less to blame and Michael Atherton has only one solid first-innings score to his name.

Atherton's form at county level is no better and it can hardly fail to prey on his thoughts as he considers his options. Graveney remains firmly in his corner, keen for him to lead the side in the Caribbean; Atherton is sufficiently open-minded to be swayed one way or another by events at the Oval. "I will speak to him during and after the game, unless he comes to me first," Graveney said. "I will speak to him during and after the game, unless he comes to me first," Graveney said.

Mahmood halts Brown's charge

BY BARNEY SPENDER

CHELMSFORD (third day of four): Pakistan A, with one second-innings wicket in hand, are 99 runs ahead of the ECB XI.

IT WILL still probably end with a defeat, but at least the Pakistan A team's tour will conclude today as scheduled, rather than yesterday, as seemed certain midway through the afternoon, when Dougie Brown, the Warwickshire all-rounder, was carving his way through their second innings.

After conceding a deficit of 212 on the first innings, Pakistan A slumped to 109 for four by lunch and 237 for seven at tea. Brown having claimed five of their wickets in a spell that impressively combined pace and hostility.

With a lead of just 25 and the possibility of the ECB XI claiming an extra half-hour to complete the job, the tour, which has brought just a single first-class win, against

Somerset, in nine matches, looked destined to end ingloriously.

However, that possibility was averted by a tremendous batting display by the 21-year-old all-rounder, Azhar Mahmood. Having taken the outstanding ECB wicket, that of Ashley Giles, in the morning to finish with three for 64, Mahmood transformed his team's second innings with some sparkling strokeplay.

He had to overcome a slightly shaky start and edged a ball from Graeme Welch to first slip when he was 13, only for Paul Grayson, uncharacteristically, to spill the chance. Shortly afterwards, he edged Welch again, but this time the ball dropped short.

Thereafter, having found a good partner in Abdul Razaq, who connected with some clean and powerful blows, Mahmood played with an assurance and vigour that suggested he will soon add to his nine one-day international appearances.

Razaq dominated their sev-

enth-wicket partnership of 84, scoring 55 from 65 balls, but once he had gone, well taken by Grayson off Giles, Mahmood came into his own. His half-century arrived during a flurry of boundary strokes at the expense of Ormond, who did his chances of a winter tour no good by bowling short and wide.

Once past fifty, Mahmood really opened his shoulders, striking five more sixes on his



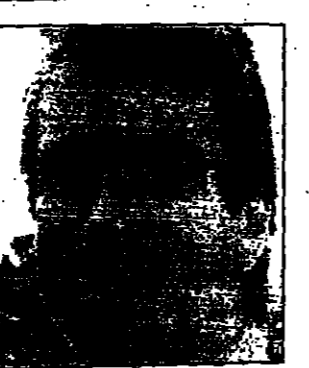
Brown: best figures

way to 92. One of these sixes, off Peter Such, hit the rear wall of the Tom Pearce stand, while the first ball of a new Welch spell was greeted with a huge straight drive into the gardens of Hayes Close. Mahmood, having hit five fours and six sixes, looked set for a deserved hundred when Brown had him caught behind.

That, in itself, was a kind of justice, for Brown had dominated most of the day and the Scot ended it with career-best figures of seven for 83, which may have convinced Graham Gooch, the ECB manager here and England A manager this winter, that he is worth talking to Kenya and Sri Lanka. The ball that removed the Pakistan captain, Mohammad Wasim, was a real stunner that he could only glove to Maddy at second slip. He produced another good one to end Hasan Raza's fluent innings of 57 and looked certain to go on and wrap up the match until the seventh-wicket pair put an end to thoughts of an early finish.

Derbyshire discord still festering

ALAN LEE



Championship Commentary

IT WILL take more than a solitary victory — even one completed by an innings and inside two days — to lift the clouds of mistrust, suspicion and division from Derbyshire. The wounds are too deep, the principles felt too strongly.

On Saturday, inspired by Devon Malcolm with his blood up, Derbyshire brought Lancashire's surge up the Britannic Assurance county championship to an abrupt halt. They bowled them out twice in the day, for 118 and 256, and the consequent 24 points should prise them off the foot of the table. It was a surreal day, and they have had few enough of those.

There was as much to admire in Derbyshire's cricket from Malcolm's match figures of ten for 65 through to Dominic Cork's five-wicket return, as there was to deplore in that of Lancashire, whose submission was pitiful.

With the scent of place-money to interest them after a string of recent victories, they suddenly discarded all the disciplines of four-day cricket and Michael Atherton, who fell to Malcolm for four and five, felt the ire of his own

supporters as he was jeered from the field.

The spirits of Derbyshire supporters were further lifted yesterday by news that the club is close to signing Saeed Anwar, the accomplished Pakistani opening batsman, as their overseas player for next season. Anwar, 28, averaged 60 in the Test series in England last summer and should be a decent acquisition.

dates back to the walkout by Dean Jones in early June, genesis of the county's summer ferment. A week ago, it was thought that the conflict between players and committee, over the handling of Jones's departure, had been resolved. This is now clearly not the case.

The story so far is that Kim Barnett, former captain and distinguished servant, was fined for making a comment on radio in response to some unflattering observations by Jones regarding the attitude of Derbyshire's senior players. Barnett, incensed, took his case to an appeal, backed by the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA).

The hearing, delayed once through the absence of the county chairman, Mike Horton, seemed sure to be aborted last week when, after a meeting of the committee, the fine was quashed. The accompanying statement, however, has succeeded only in reinforcing Barnett's determination to have the affair aired. He is said to be "absolutely disgusted".

I understand the committee did not admit they had been at fault in any way and nor,

more importantly, did they concede that Barnett's remarks had remained within the public comment guidelines recently issued by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

Although the board will not be anxious to stage a hearing on an already withdrawn fine, Barnett insists that the club is still implicitly accusing him of misconduct. The PCA is also anxious to establish the principles of freedom of speech for the remainder of their members.

What happens next may depend upon the position of Horton. The same committee meeting, I understand, passed a vote of no confidence in the chairman, who was not present. This has now been relayed to him and, though he is back in the country after a business trip, he has stayed away from the county ground.

Another committee meeting is scheduled for late this month and Horton is widely expected to stand down. Whether this will free his successor to make a more conciliatory statement, one liable to placate Barnett and other distinctly unsettled players, remains to be seen.



Strang, the Kent leg spinner, bowls to Bevan, the Australian batsman, who made 55 on his last chance to reclaim a place in the Test team

New arrivals fail initial test of quality

BY RICHARD HOBSON

CANTERBURY (second day of three; Kent won toss): Kent, with five second-innings wickets in hand, are 120 ahead of the Australians.

YESTERDAY marked the 100th day of the Ashes tour and, if early losses suggested that the Australians hit the ground limping, then they have had little need for a Peter Mandelson figure to add spin to their achievements since.

Victory at the Oval will endorse their claims to be considered among the finest sides to land on these shores. It would also prompt further discussion about the state of the English game because, on the evidence here, they will enter the sixth and final Test with at least one bowler who is some way short of international class.

Few who saw Michael Kasparowicz at Edgbaston can query his credentials to replace Jason Gillespie. The situation with the third seam bowler is, however, rather different. Shaun Young and Shane Lee, the two all-rounders called into the party, are competing for that one spot here, but neither is presenting an irresistible case for inclusion.

Indeed, had Bevan not littered his spell of chinamen with full tosses, then the Australians might be tempted to play two spinners. Young has performed a useful role for Gloucestershire as a second seam bowler for much of the summer. Entrusted with the new ball when Kent began their second innings 114 runs behind, he responded with a tidy spell of four overs that cost six runs, but did not look threatening until Wells drove

lavishly at a wide ball when he returned to the attack.

Lee prompted a false swing from Ward with his second ball at the Pavilion End. He conceded just ten runs from seven overs during his first spell and found some extra lift in a second spell, during which he also bowled House, to add to his four tail-end wickets on Saturday afternoon.

It says much, though, that Ward and Smith were able to post Kent's best first-wicket stand of the season. Smith has seen his average plummet since the completion of his duties with Cambridge University amid suggestions that he is essentially a front-foot player. A lordly hook against Kasparowicz with the ball just four overs old countered such an argument.

He fell leg-before with the total on 99 when he attempted

to work Mark Waugh through the on side, and Ward added 60 more with Wells before pulling a full toss from Bevan to mid-wicket. His 68 came in 192 minutes with 11 fours, but Wells survived a dropped catch by Steve Waugh at second slip on 64 before changing his arm again, this time fatally, four runs later.

Cars began queueing along the Old Dover Road well before 9am and around 20 spectators rushed in as soon as the gates were opened to secure the best view. All very civilised it was, too, with a jazz band pumping out *Waltzing Matilda* during the intervals as youngsters practised leg breaks on the outfield.

The best innings of the day had been completed by then. Steve Waugh, unbeaten on 94 overnight, completed the 45th century of his career and nineteenth in England in the

first over. Nobody bettered the straight drive that took him to 98, although the hook that took him to 150 came close. Why does he employ that stroke so rarely?

A spell of three wickets for one run in 17 balls by Phillips reduced the Australians to 268 for eight with two good catches by Marsh and a superlative effort by Ward, who caught Bevan at long leg when he appeared to have hooked for six.

Waugh edged a rearing delivery by Strang to Marsh having scored 154 in 278 minutes with 26 fours. He wore a bandage around his right wrist and is still suffering from the bat-jar injury that he sustained at Old Trafford. Errol Alcott, the Australia physiotherapist, confirmed that Waugh will be fit for the Oval, though. It was not all good news for England.

REWARDING TIMES

Win a trip to Barbados with our Ashes game

The Times and Sporting Index give you the chance to win a 10-day trip for two to Barbados to see the West Indies play, in our Ashes Test competition. The prize will go to the player who scores the most points over the six-match series. Today we offer two pairs of tickets to one day of the Westworth Golf Toyota World Match Play. The game allows you to challenge our cricket experts. Success or failure is based not just on being right or wrong, but on how right or wrong you are.

HOW IT WORKS

Printed below are five predictions about the number of runs which will be made at the sixth Test at The Oval. You must decide whether the individual or team will score more or fewer than the number we state and back your judgment by placing a bet of between 20 and 100 points for each question. You must answer all five questions and you have a total staking budget fund of 200 points which you must not exceed and which must be divided between your five stakes. Then call our entry line below before midnight on Wednesday. Follow the instructions on the line. To help you keep a record of your entry, use the form below. Results for the

fifth Test, with our predictions in brackets, are: Alec Stewart made 103 runs (65); Ricky Ponting made 54 runs (70); the first innings score for the team batting first was 427 (320); Darren Gough runs - default of 100 applies as below; the highest opening batting partnership in the fifth Test was 117 (50). To check your score take the result for each question. Calculate how many runs you were right or wrong by: multiply the difference by your stake and the answer is how much you won or lost. For example, Alec Stewart made 103 runs. If you went more than 65 you win 38 times your stake (103 minus 65). If you went less, you lose 38 times your stake.

You can also check your position on our leaderboard in the race for our star prize. If you have entered for all five tests so far you can find your total score in the competition to date by calling 0891 814 806 and inputting your 10-digit PIN. Calls cost 50p per minute. S. McLaughlin, of London SW12, wins a pair of tickets to the sixth Test at The Oval for scoring 13,880 points in the fifth Test.

*The default value is applied only where the player is not selected. Each country must complete one innings, otherwise all bets are off, and the prize fund is rolled forward to the next test. In the event of a tie the winner will be selected at random from all correct entries. Normal TNL rules apply.



SPORTING INDEX

Sporting Index CA (tel: 0891 814 806)

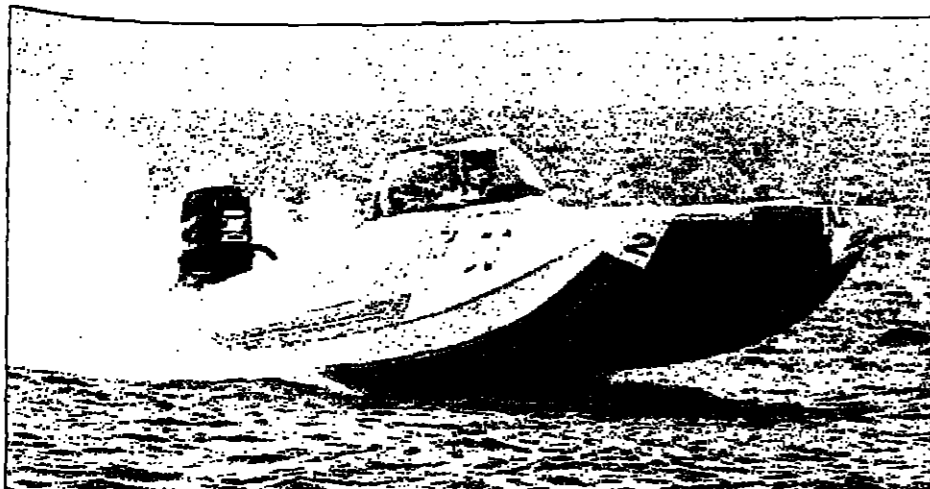
Sky Sports Text page 361

Questions for the 6th Test	No of Runs	High or Low	Stake
How many runs will Steve Waugh score in the 6th Test? *Default value 75	75	MORE <input type="checkbox"/> or LESS <input type="checkbox"/>	(min 20, max 100)
How many runs will Graham Thorpe score in the 6th Test? *Default value 70	70	MORE <input type="checkbox"/> or LESS <input type="checkbox"/>	(min 20, max 100)
How many runs will the team batting first score in their first innings? *Default value 100	360	MORE <input type="checkbox"/> or LESS <input type="checkbox"/>	(min 20, max 100)
How many runs will Glenn McGrath concede in the 6th Test? *Default value 100	100	MORE <input type="checkbox"/> or LESS <input type="checkbox"/>	(min 20, max 100)
Highest batting partnership for any wicket in the 6th Test	140	MORE <input type="checkbox"/> or LESS <input type="checkbox"/>	(min 20, max 100)
Total staked (max 200)			
The breaker			
How many Sixes will there be in the 6th Test?		Sixes <input type="text"/>	(no stake needed)

TO ENTER CALL 0891 665 597

(+44 990 100 397 ex UK). Lines close at midnight on Wednesday. 0891 calls cost 50p/min at all times. +44 990 calls charged at standard rates.

THE TIMES



The powerboat speedster Neil Holmes puts the Talley Medical through her paces

White-knuckle ride across the waves

Few people have travelled faster on water than they have on land. Even fewer have topped 100mph in a boat. But with the help of the five times powerboat world champion, Neil Holmes, I achieved both.

In preparation for next weekend's National Express world four-litre championship at Cowes, Holmes, 37, took me for a spin in his £100,000 catamaran, Talley Medical. Holmes casually eased Talley Medical, which has a six-litre, 600hp engine and can reach 120mph, to 105mph. The Lymington-Yarmouth ferry did not stand a chance. From a standing start outside Yarmouth's harbour, our boat sped to Lymington in one minute and 21 seconds: the ferry takes half an hour.

I am a natural scaredy-cat, so I was not looking forward to this assignment. And powerboat racing is dangerous. There have been several horrifying accidents. In 1990, Stefano Casiraghi, husband of Princess Caroline of Monaco, was killed in a crash. Dick Fulham died during practice in 1985. In the 1995 world championship, Hamed Buhaleba was killed when his Victory Team boat flipped in the Solent. Why anyone would want to risk their lives, therefore, for the sake of screaming around the ocean at great speed was quite beyond me. I put the question to Holmes. "I am an adrenalin junkie," he

Victoria Walker holds on tight as she goes for a 100mph spin aboard a powerboat

SPORT FOR ALL

confessed. "And I love being on water. Once you get salt water in your blood, there's no stopping you."

It was as I feared: I was placing my life in the hands of a madman. Yet on the water everything was different. Holmes was cool and fully in control of a beast that had so much power it could go from 0 to 60mph in about three seconds. At 40mph, the catamaran aquaplaned along the surface. Spume sprayed the

side of the boat from bow to stern.

As Holmes released the throttle to increase the speed, he "trimmed" the nose of the craft, creating an air pocket beneath the twin hulls, until we were effectively gliding above the water. No spray was visible and the ride became smooth. Holmes said: "We can go much faster if we can get above the water and escape the slowing effect of its friction."

To this end, as driver, Holmes not only steers and controls the throttle but constantly "trims" the boat to achieve the most aerodynamic — and safe — angle.

The cockpit canopy of Talley Medical was made of the same reinforced material as an F-16 fighter jet. The bucket seats are like a fighter-jet's and space is minimal.

Tied in with a five-strap safety harness so tightly I could not move, I was seated behind Holmes in the navigator's chair. I wore full, flame-retardant overalls, crash helmet and lifejacket. To my right was the speedometer (which I monitored with exhilarated alarm for the entire journey), between my feet was the dome of a large compass. Attached to the back of Holmes's chair was a chart, plotting the route of a race and position of marker buoys, to my left an intercom system, so I could talk to the driver.

In next weekend's championships, Holmes's navigator,



A slightly hesitant Victoria Walker prepares for an exhilarating aquatic experience

Jim Cox, who is 50, will guide Holmes through three races of different distances (from 36.9 to 90.85 nautical miles) on consecutive days. Holmes comments: "I trust him completely. Whatever he tells me to do, I do without question. There is no point arguing because he knows where we are going and I haven't a clue."

Competitors have to read set buoys on the course, which are marked by race officials. These markers can be ten miles apart and in the open sea a good navigator can win or lose a race for the team.

Holmes recalls: "In one race we found ourselves heading towards Poole in a tight pack with boats all around. Sud-

denly, Jim told me to stop. 'Stop the boat?' I asked. He said 'Yes', I stopped, and all the boats around us tore off into the distance. Jim then pointed to port and said: 'There's the buoy'. Trapped among the pack, the buoy had been missed by the other boats. By stopping, we were able to gain the space to turn left to the buoy, as well as losing the pack."

There is no denying that powerboat racing can be an expensive sport. It is perhaps most popular in the rich Arab states, where drivers own their boats outright and race with little or no sponsorship for big prize money.

But most people get into the sport at a much lower — and cheaper — level. It is possible to get a second-hand boat that

could be used for recreation as well as racing for about £2,000. But it would not be possible simply to buy the top-of-the-range, monster boat if you had, say, a big lottery win, then go out racing.

Race organisers would consider it too dangerous for a novice to join a high-power race. Newcomers to the sport have to work their way up

through the classes. Peter Dredge, the Powerboat Racing and Motor Cruising Manager of the Royal Yachting Association, believes that powerboat racing is one of the "best-kept secrets in sport". He explains: "A lot of people get into racing in offshore events like Poole's Cancer Research Race, a 40-mile event open to people with recreation-

al boats such as ski-boats."

It is even possible to make money out of the sport. Holmes has been able to make a good living by using his technical expertise as an engineer to build, tune and test boats, as well as winning prize money through his skill as a racer.

His skill, however, does not end there — he proved quite adept as a "scaredy-cat pacifier". I have had few experiences in my life to equal the thrill and enjoyment I had as we messed about in the waters of the Solent.

As we eased Talley Medical back into Lymington harbour, I no longer needed to ask Neil Holmes why he risked his life and bank balance for such a crazy sport. He had shown me the answer.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

- The Royal Yachting Association, RYA House, Romney Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO5 4YA; tel. 01703 629962.
- The United Kingdom Offshore Boating Association (UKOBA), West Lodge, Colwood Lane, Bolney, West Sussex RH17 5QQ; tel. 01444 381349.

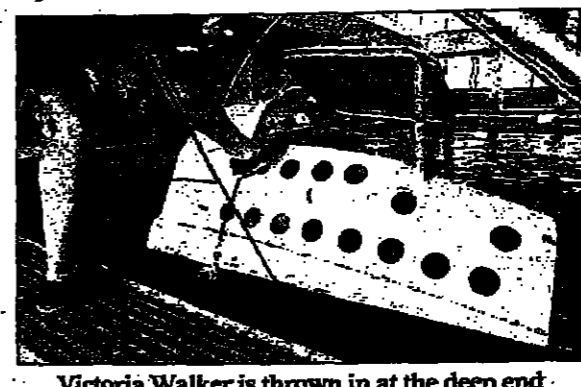
only to stay calm and you'll be fine."

Before I was allowed to start trying to escape after being flipped into the water, I had to wait for a tap on the shoulder by diver Carl Ogden, who monitored my progress underwater.

The routine is simple. First, remove the steering wheel from the steering column. Second, find the bar that forms the roof support and hold on to it. Third, release the seat-belt harness. Fourth, pull yourself down and out through the hole in the roof.

Upside-down, disoriented, with my eyes tightly closed, my first dunk was terrifying. I found it hard to get the steering wheel off, then forgot to grab the overhead bar before I released the belt. I eventually pulled myself out through a gap at the side of the rig, rather than through the roof.

My second and third dunks, however, were much easier. Even wearing blacked-out goggles to simulate dark or murky water, I knew what to expect and managed to complete the test without panic or mishap.



Victoria Walker is thrown in at the deep end

PASSPORT TO EUROPE



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Save at least 25% on a luxurious short break for two at many of the best hotels in Europe with our Passport to Europe offer, in association with Relais and Châteaux and MasterCard. The offer, valid for unlimited stays between September 22, 1997 and April 9, 1998, gives you a choice of 178 hotels in 16 countries.

Passport to Europe offers an inclusive package for two people for one night at a price which includes your stay, dinner and breakfast plus service charges and Vat. You could choose to stay at the Mas de Torrent, in Spain, pictured above, a magnificently restored 18th-century farm located on the Costa Brava, for about £65 per person per night.

HOW TO APPLY

Collect four differently numbered tokens from The Times this week and attach them to the application form which will be printed on Wednesday. You will receive a pack containing a Passport to Europe card and the Relais and Châteaux 1997 International Guide with details of the 178 participating hotels. You will also receive details and a voucher for Le Lunch — entitling you to enjoy a gourmet lunch at one of 175 Relais and Châteaux restaurants in 13 European countries for just £35. In addition, we are offering special travel discounts to Europe, with savings of up to 50% off brochure prices, with Leisure Direction.



TOKEN 2

● Full details of Passport to Europe appeared in Saturday's Weekend section. For a copy call 0171-481 3355 during office hours. For details of Leisure Direction's exclusive travel offers call 0181-324 4011.

WIN A TWO-NIGHT BREAK

You could win a two-night break for two at your choice of more than 250 Relais and Châteaux hotels in Europe by calling our competition hotline on 0891 300 370 (ex UK +44 990 100 373), before midnight tonight, with your answer to this question:

Where is the Mas de Torrent hotel?
a) the Costa del Sol b) the Costa Brava

The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries received. Normal TNL competition rules apply. 0891 Calls cost 50p per minute.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This slam, from this year's Spring Foursomes, was misplayed by a current and an ex-international.

Dealer North	East-West game	IMPs
♠ J865 ♥ K1098 ♦ 102 ♣ J65	♠ A92 ♥ A J ♦ A 8 4 ♣ K 10 3 2	♠ 44 ♥ 76532 ♦ J95 ♣ Q987

Contract: Six Spades by South. Lead: ten of hearts

The auction was similar at the two tables: North opened One Club, South replied One Diamond and North bid Two No-Trumps showing 18-19 points. South continued with Three Spades, and after some cue-bidding both declarers ended in Six Spades.

At each table West led the ten of hearts. How should declarer play? If the spades are 3-2 he has no problem. But if the spades are 4-1 and declarer misguesses then he has to decide what to do about his potential losing heart.

In practice both declarers (Jason Hackbert for the Mossop team and Willie Coyle for the Telscher team) took the ace of hearts at trick one. Coyle guessed the spades correctly, so with the diamonds dividing 3-2 he was home. But Jason played the ace and queen of spades and a third round of spades to the king; he then played on diamonds, hoping to discard the losing heart from dummy on the fourth round. But West was able to ruff in on the third round of

diamonds and cash the king of hearts for one off.

Both declarers should have considered that ending before rejecting the heart finesse at trick one. By playing the ace, if they have to lose a trump trick they will require the diamonds to be 3-2 with the player with the trump winner following to three rounds. That is less than even money — the player with four trumps is more likely to be short in diamonds than the player with one trump.

The right line is to finesse the heart at trick one. As it is 50-50 who has the king of hearts, it is the better chance if declarer has to lose a spade. If diamonds had also split badly, a successful heart finesse would still leave declarer in good shape.

For details of The Times Midland Private Banking National Bridge Challenge, call the organisers on 0181-942 9706.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

SAHELLAN
a. A religious rite
b. An African region
c. A loose, flowing gown

LA SAGRADA FAMILIA
a. A laxative for home use
b. The old, old story
c. A cathedral

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

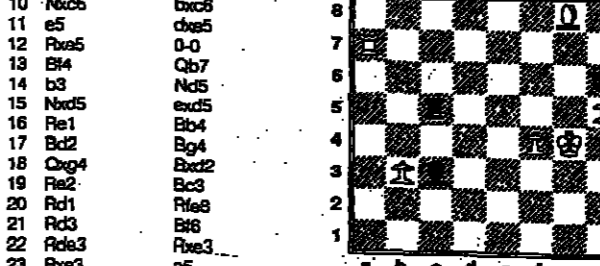
Shared title

In the main section of the Smith & Williamson British championship, four players tied for first prize with 8/11: Michael Adams, Matthew Sadler, Tony Miles and John Emms. After a further play-off, Adams and Sadler were declared joint champions.

White: Michael Adams
Black: Matthew Sadler
British championship play-off, August 1997

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

Diagram of final position



Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

Crosstale for British championship play-off

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

In the above table, 1 represents a win, 1/2 a draw and 0 a loss

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Petrosian — Gusev, USSR 1968.

How did White expose a serious weakness in the black position?



Solution on page 41

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

[illegible][illegible]

RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interims: Alliance Trust, Arco, Skipton Building Society, Severfield-Reeve, Taylor Nelson AGB, Torday & Carlisle. Final: None scheduled. Economic statistics: UK July PSIR, Bank of France money market tender, Bof discount bill auction, US Treasury auction of short-term bills.

TOMORROW

Interims: Ben Bailey, Ermsa, Parity, Shires Smaller Cos. Final: Brown & Jackson, Future International, Plico Holdings, Stoves. Economic statistics: No UK data scheduled, US July housing starts, US short-term bills, BTM/Schroder weekly US chain store sales, Federal open market committee meeting, API weekly oil supply statistics.

WEDNESDAY

Interims: BUL Group, Bodycote International, JN Nichols, Virto, Renkold Initial, Richardson Westgarth, Weir Group. Final: Ambridge Brothers. Economic statistics: UK July retail sales, UK July provisional M4, final M0 money supply, UK BBA end-July bank lending, UK BBA end-July building society lending, US trade deficit.

THURSDAY

Interims: CFS Group, T Clarke, Group Trust, Halifax. Final: None scheduled. Economic statistics: UK Q2 provisional GDP, UK August CBI industrial trends survey, UK CBI quarterly economic forecasts.

FRIDAY

Interims: TF & JH Braine (Holdings). Final: None scheduled. Economic statistics: UK July motor vehicle production.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.10	2.10
Austria Sch	21.80	19.94
Belgium Fr	63.71	56.75
Canada \$	2.290	2.172
Cyprus Cyp	0.805	0.833
Denmark Kr	11.74	10.85
Finland M	6.35	6.35
France Fr	10.3	9.95
Germany DM	4.86	2.85
Greece Dr	13.26	14.6
Hong Kong \$	1.15	1.06
Iceland	5.97	5.32
Italy Lit	2099	2092
Japan Yen	204.03	186.50
Malta	0.673	0.614
Netherlands Gld	3.68	3.194
New Zealand \$	2.67	2.43
Norway Kr	12.78	11.85
Portugal Esc	309.53	297.50
Spain Ptas	233.29	240.50
Sweden Kr	13.81	12.51
Switzerland Fr	2.67	2.35
Turkey Lira	272.92	252.14
USA \$	1.715	1.572

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

COMPANIES

CLARE STEWART

Halifax has that little Xtra cash



Mike Blackburn has to decide what to do with the Halifax's £3.5 billion surplus capital

HALIFAX: Completing the expanded interim bank reporting season on Thursday, the Halifax, led by Mike Blackburn, is unlikely to give much away other than bare figures. The recently converted building society will break with its rivals by not paying a maiden interim dividend. James Johnson, bank analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing (CLL), has forecast pre-tax profits of £755.5 million with exceptional conversion and disposal costs of £88.2 million against interims of £649.1 million last time. Mr Johnson predicts that underlying operating profits will increase 3.5 per cent to £830 million, with earnings per share of 20.6p.

What will chiefly preoccupy analysts and millions of shareholders, however, is what the Halifax intends to do with its £3.5 billion surplus capital. It has indicated that some of the money will be used for acquisitions, while a further portion will be set aside for possible future distributions.

The method that might be used for distributing the money to shareholders will prompt serious discussion between the bank and its advisers. The professional fund managers will want a share buyback, while millions of private investors are more likely to prefer a special dividend payout.

Either way the Halifax will have to make some tough decisions within the near future. Potential acquisition targets are pricey at present and this newcomer to the banking sector will have to decide in which areas it most needs to boost its overall ambition of being the leading provider of personal financial services in the UK.

ARGOS: the catalogue retailer, will have to work hard to impress when unveiling interim figures today. Its golden reputation among retailers has been left a little tarnished after two profit warnings this year and its shares have been knocked sharply off course. In May it said that first-half results would be hit by one-off costs, higher interest charges, and slower trading in key areas, such as electrical goods.

Analysts at NatWest Securities

expect pre-tax profits to fall 14 per cent to £27.5 million, with earnings down 4 per cent to 6.7p. The dividend is pencilled in at 5.8p, a rise of 9 per cent.

Top of the range forecasts are expecting pre-tax profits of £31 million for the half year, while full-year predictions currently stand at £153 million pre-tax.

Christmas remains the group's key trading season, and second-half performance should be helped by lower costs. At the interim stage the market will be looking for more detail on how underlying trading is holding up and how expansion

plans are progressing. Another area of concern is the impact of recently announced changes on recommended retail prices for certain categories of electrical goods.

TAYLOR NELSON AGB: The only quoted market research company reports half-year results today. Peel Hunt, its house broker, is forecasting pre-tax profits of just over £5 million, compared with £4 million in 1996. A dividend of 1p is expected, with earnings around 1.4p per share. Last year the group saw

pre-tax profits hit by losses at MRM, a door-to-door distribution subsidiary, which has since been sold, although there may still be some associated costs shown in the first-half figures.

Last year the star performer was the media division, which does reader research for newspapers. Peter Jones, analyst at Peel Hunt, said he expected to see that business and the other core consumer and healthcare divisions performing strongly.

STOVES: The cooker maker is expected to report year-end pre-

tax profits of £51 million, up from £42.8 million. The forecasts follow Stoves' own figures, released last month, showing that pre-tax profits for the year to May were ahead by 20 per cent while sales were up 27 per cent to about £80 million. In spite of the increases, sales in the last quarter, the company said, were disrupted by the effect on consumer confidence in the run-up to the general election. The market during this period was 10 per cent below expectations.

Fuller performance details should shed more light on Stoves' plans for overseas growth, with the European market identified for particular attention. Current trading figures will also show to what degree Stoves has benefited from increased spending on household fixtures and fittings prompted by the building society windfall payouts.

Analysts are looking for a dividend rise of about 15.4 per cent to 6p with earnings increasing to 15.4p, up 8.5 per cent.

RENTOKIL INITIAL: Half-year figures on Wednesday from the pest control to tropical plants group are expected to show solid growth across most of its core activities. The figures will also be flattered by the BET acquisition and its earnings-enhancing impact.

The impact of the BET businesses means that Rentokil will not find it difficult to beat its well-flagged commitment to 20 per cent annual earnings growth, but there will be close examination of underlying growth to get a better idea of how well the group is performing.

Analysts at NatWest forecast first-half pre-tax profits will rise 47 per cent to £198 million, with earnings ahead by 21 per cent to 4.76p. The dividend is set to rise 20 per cent to 0.9p.

Paul Morland, an analyst, is expecting to see a strong performance from the hygiene and cleaning division. Pest control will be held back by sluggish markets and increased competition, while in the plant and distribution services, the City Link parcels business is likely to show good growth.

UK progress prey to Buba

For the second successive week the nervous state of financial markets will dominate the economic agenda after Friday's sharp falls in equity markets. Germany's Bundesbank has talked up the mark successfully, using interviews hinting at possible measures. The focus will be on its council meeting on Thursday to see if anything happens.

A flexible repo rate is possible, allowing the market to edge up interest rates. But the Bundesbank may feel it is meeting its aims without risks to domestic recovery. Statistics due this week affecting the decision include growth of M3 money supply. Forecasts collated by Standard & Poor's MMS expect growth of 6.3 per cent above the 1996 fourth-quarter base.

New York will wait on the deliberations of the Federal Reserve's open market committee, starting on Tuesday. Any substantive rate move would cause surprise.

In the UK, it is a busy week for statistics. On Monday, forecasters polled by Standard & Poor's expect a public sector debt repayment of £800 million in July. On Wednesday, the continuing consumer boom comes under scrutiny. Retail sales are thought to have risen 0.4 per cent in July, making 5.9 per cent over 12 months, up from 5.3 per cent in June. M4, the wide measure of money supply, is forecast to stay above range, up 0.1 per cent in July, edging the annual rate up a notch to 11.7 per cent. On the median forecast, M4 leading rose from £5.5 to £6 billion.

On Thursday, the CBI's industrial trends survey may show a less rosy view, focusing on the impact of sterling's strength on manufacturers. This could affect sentiment. The markets will also pay attention to provisional quarterly figures for gross domestic product. The median forecast would have second-quarter GDP up another strong 0.9 per cent, making an annual 3.4 per cent.

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

The Sunday Times: Bay Dana Petroleum, Golden Rose, Bridport-Gundry, Eve, Ultra Electronics, David S Smith, The Sunday Telegraph, Bay Thornton, GKN, Goveat, Emerging Markets Alliance, Resources, Columbus Group, Britton Group, Weyale Garden Centre, Regent Inns, The Observer, Bay Smith & Nephew, Glyndwed, Mail on Sunday, Bay Leigh Interests, Heritage Bathrooms.

Music sales shake-up

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SUPERSTORES could almost double their share of the £2.85 billion music and video market to 20 per cent over the next few years, a report published today suggests.

While specialists such as Virgin Our Price and HMV can offer an authoritative range, the mass market retailers such as Woolworths, WH Smith and John Menzies are being hit by superstore groups that are focusing squarely on fast-moving chart titles offered

at low prices, the report from the Verdict retail consultancy says. Pricing is the key issue across the sector. Verdict says. Price sensitivity is high and customers remain convinced that products, especially CDs, are overpriced.

Although sales growth slowed to about 4 per cent last year, half the previous year's rate, the new release schedule, led by the latest Oasis album this week, promises a good second half for the industry.

Industrial tribunal to decide on Cowie director's sacking

BY FRASER NELSON

ONE of the most bitter boardroom feuds seen in the City this year could reach a conclusion when an industrial tribunal sits tomorrow to decide whether Cowie, Britain's second largest bus operator, unfairly dismissed Neil Pykett as a director.

Sir James McKinnon, executive chairman, will be at the tribunal in Birmingham four months after dismissing Mr Pykett for what the company alleged was "gross and persistent misconduct". Mr Pykett will contend that this amounted to little more than voicing dissent in the boardroom.

The dismissal, he will claim, is little more than a thinly veiled attempt to get rid of him

without any of the £1 million compensation he would have otherwise been entitled to under his three-year rolling contract.

The dispute erupted when Mr Pykett realised he would not succeed Gordon Hodgson, now 65, as chief executive. Mr Pykett was head of the leasing division — until recently the biggest earner in the group — and had hoped to take over on Mr Hodgson's retirement.

Under the company's statutes, Mr Pykett was required to hand in three years' notice. Cowie says he had lost enthusiasm for the job, and started becoming "obstructive" — although no extreme improprieties are suggested.

Both parties agree that most of the alleged offences are detailed in letters between Sir James and Mr Pykett.

The tribunal comes three months after the company called a special shareholder meeting to dismiss Mr Pykett as a director, when it became clear he had no intention of resigning after being dismissed from his post.

This involved mailing shareholders with pamphlets asking their support, but which did not give any more details of Mr Pykett's supposed misdemeanours other than the "gross misconduct" line.

The company won over its institutional support, and Mr

Pykett resigned on the eve of the special shareholder meeting.

Cowie said over the weekend that it was confident of success, but feared a drawn-out affair. A spokesman said: "Our legal guys have told us that it will probably drag on; if there's a second session it will probably be in September. But we will be fighting our case vigorously, and intend to win."

Mr Pykett, who has been resting at his Essex home since his dismissal, said: "This will be the first chance I have had to meet the company face to face and let my case be argued in full. I am hoping for justice."

Gardner Merchant gains Army contract

BY FRASER NELSON

GARDNER MERCHANT, the catering, cleaning and office maintenance services company, has bought two property management businesses from KS Systems for an undisclosed amount.

The purchase of KS Building Services and Genesis Facilities Management will provide Gardner Merchant with another £300 million of annual outsourcing contracts. The deal includes a £20 million contract to provide all non-military services for the Army's Aldershot Garrison and a £60 million deal to look after non-medical operations at Hereford Hospital.

The company was keen to

acquire the two KS management businesses to increase its exposure to the growing site-maintenance market, where public sector bodies put everything from security to air conditioning out to tender.

The Hereford Hospital contract is one of only 14 deals to be handed to the private sector so far.

Gardner Merchant was the first private company to win a comprehensive, non-clinical services contract, and hopes to build its presence in the sector.

The two companies also come with contracts for Railtrack, Prudential Portfolio managers and the MCC at Lord's Cricket Ground.

Keep our opinions to yourself.

It's all very well to say share and share alike, but in all honesty wouldn't you prefer to enjoy at leisure your own copy of the Times Educational Supplement? The FE Focus section, in particular, really does deserve much more than a rushed flick through in the staffroom. So for opinions worth relating the time to listen to, buy your own copy, take it home and keep it to yourself.

THE FOCUS

MAKE IT PART OF YOUR CURRICULUM

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

RAL buys 17 amusement centres

RAL, the largest operator of amusement arcades in Britain, has raised £6.3 million to fund the acquisition of 17 Gold Touch amusement centres from SAL, the privately owned leisure group (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The centres, all in Yorkshire, had a turnover of £3.7 million last year. RAL, which was a £26 million management buyout from Rank in 1996, operates 104 Quicksilver Centres in the United Kingdom.

Nick Harding, managing director of the company, said: "Building on our market leadership in a highly fragmented market is a key part of RAL's strategy."



Graham Glenfield, RAL's technical director, left, with Ray Mercy, finance director, centre, and Nick Harding, who is keen to build on the company's market leadership

Conformity is 'killing' franchises

BY DOMINIC WALSH

ALMOST three quarters of franchise companies withdrew from the market within ten years, with half quitting within five years, new research shows.

The Franchise Paradox, published this week by Cassell, argues that, of the 400 or so franchisors in this country, fewer than half have any significant potential for growth and many of the smaller companies may not survive.

It says that even a proven track record by a franchisor in the more mature US market is no guarantee of success. Among

the big-name restaurant brands to have withdrawn from the UK after a short period are Little Caesar's, the pizza delivery chain, Popeye's Famous Fried Chicken and Arby's, the sandwich concept. Wendy's, the burger group, also failed at the first attempt and is only now successfully establishing itself.

The study, which looked at 1,600 retail franchises in the UK, also calls into question the widely quoted statistic that businesses that take on a franchise are five times more likely to succeed than other small businesses.

Stuart Price, the book's author and a

consultant with KPMG Management Consulting, argues that the standardisation fostered by franchisors is often allowed to kill innovation, ultimately putting their future at risk.

"The franchise industry places excessive stress on uniformity and conformity, an approach which is out of touch in today's competitive business market," he said. "No one would expect a company prevented from using new ideas and entrepreneurial insight to survive for long."

Mr Price said the best franchisors harnessed rather than suppressed the entrepreneurial flair of their franchisees.

NOTICE OF VARIATION OF INTEREST RATES

With effect from 1 September 1997, for both new and existing customers, the following rates will increase to:

Mortgage Rate 8.45% per annum

100% Mortgage Rate 8.95% per annum

Flexible Choice Mortgage Rate 7.70% per annum

Royal Premier Mortgage Rate 7.70% per annum

Existing arrangements apply for Centralised Mortgage Services customers.

The Royal Bank of Scotland

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc.

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Friday August 18 1997
Economic Outlook
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New era economics is all the rage. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, reportedly believes that the US is now capable of fast growth, low unemployment and low inflation. Last week's UK data showing unemployment falling another 50,000 in July, taking the rate to 5.5 per cent, while wage inflation remained steady, was eerily similar to recent US experience.

Stripping out the usual distorting factors, price inflation was also quiescent, although the media fuss over the thoroughly misleading rise in the all-items rate to 3.3 per cent showed why this measure deserves the name "headline". Even the dear old Bank of England wondered whether, perhaps, the rate of unemployment necessary to stop inflation from rising (the so-called natural rate) was lower than had previously been supposed.

But on hearing the cry that it is different this time, anyone who lived through the British economic experience of the past 20 years must recall the late 1980s. Ten years ago, the Lawson boom was approaching its crescendo. It was supposedly different then, but before too long it was shown to be depressingly the same — surging inflation, sky-high interest rates, falling output and rising unemployment. In the late 1980s, the idea that Britain had transformed her economic performance came and went, like a thief in the night. So why should it be different this time?

This time it really will be different



ROGER BOOTLE

The Lawson boom is a bad standard of comparison. It was particularly ill-balanced in being heavily biased towards London and the South East and closely bound up with the property market. This imbalance heightened the inflationary response to the expansion of demand.

Moreover, it was heavily credit-financed. The proportion of personal incomes devoted to savings (net of personal borrowing) fell from 10.7 per cent in 1985 to 6.2 per cent in 1988. By contrast, in the current expansion, consumers are cutting their coat according to their cloth. The savings rate has fallen only slightly and is still above 10 per cent.

Furthermore, the late 1980s expansion was accompanied by a steadily worsening trade deficit. So the pressure of demand was greater than the bare figures for domestic output suggested and, while it lasted, the flood of imports allowed the level of personal consumption, and hence feelings of prosperity, to run ahead of economic reality.

More importantly, since the late 1980s the economy has undergone dramatic change, starting with the recession of 1990-92, which changed attitudes profoundly. This was not as serious

nationally as the 1979-81 recession but in some ways it had more effect. While manufacturing industry in the Midlands and North was hit heavily in 1979-81, many businesses in the South barely knew the economy was in recession. But 1990-92 hit them particularly hard, the first really serious recession in the South since 1939. Equally, the housing market experience was quite different. In the 1979-81 recession, real house prices fell but the rate of inflation was so high that

at worst, in money terms house prices remained static. In 1990-92, house prices fell with a vengeance for the first time since before the war, giving rise to the phenomenon of negative equity.

Yet the changes go much deeper than the mere effects of recession. It is only a decade since the Lawson boom, but the changes that have occurred during that time amount to an economic revolution. On the international scene they include the collapse of communism, the worldwide acceptance of the market economy and the emergence of China as a major trading power. That same time has seen the widespread dissemination of micro-processor and communications technology, which have made possible the globalisation of many areas of business.

On the domestic front so many startling changes we now take for granted took place during this period. By the end of 1987 it was less than three years since the defeat of the miners' strike, which had threatened to bring down the Government. The weakening of union power had many more stages still to run. Now there are very few strikes by miners or anybody else. Indeed, there are precious few miners.

By 1987, privatisation had already been shown to work but the full scale of the efficiency improvements was yet to be revealed, and the electricity, water and railway industries were yet to pass into private hands. It was only in the 1988 Budget that the top rate of income tax was cut from 60 to 40 per cent. The wholesale downsizing and restructuring of British companies and the marketisation of British economic life lay in the future. In 1987-88 leading British banks were locked in a competition over size not over profit.

In other words, the leading factors which it is alleged have transformed economic performance have only come into play in the last ten years. These changes have produced the differences in behaviour that mark out the current economic conjuncture as so promising. Wages are not pushed up, even when unemployment falls to 5.5 per cent. Consumers are canny and price-sensitive — even when spending their building society windfalls. Companies are wary of pushing their prices up, even in the midst of a consumer boom.

New eras do not begin on a certain day but rather emerge from an accumulation of changes. If the British economy, like the American, is now operating on new ground rules, then although the process of change began in 1979, historians will surely date the start of the new era within the last ten years. That is why we are entitled to think that this time it will be different.

Investors hold on to windfall payments

By Robert Miller, Banking Correspondent

MILLIONS of investors are set to hold on to more than £20 billion of the £30 billion of windfall shares they received from building society flotations.

The findings of a new survey by Mintel published today, and backed by Robert Fleming, the private City merchant bank, contradict long-held fears that a flood of cash from windfalls will fuel a high street spending boom.

The survey found that, of the £30 billion handed to customers of the Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich, Norwich Union, the insurer, and with Northern Rock still to come, only £8.2 billion would be spent.

City analysts and economists had predicted that interest rates would have to rise quite significantly if the windfall spending spree materialised. Peter Warburton, economic adviser at Robert Fleming, said: "The surge in consumer confidence, which has occurred during the past six months as these windfall payments have been eagerly awaited, is therefore likely to be reversed quite rapidly this autumn."

Mr Warburton added: "The comparison with 1988, when real wages rose strongly and homeowners borrowed to excess, is poorly made. On the basis of the survey evidence, there is no case for hitting the consumer with further rate increases."

Fleming calculated that of the £8.2 billion earmarked for spending £2.1 billion will be spent on home improvements, furnishings and DIY with the same sum again being set

aside for holidays and travel. Major electrical items for the home were also high on the priority list accounting for some £700 million.

The survey also found that nearly 77 per cent of the windfall shares would be saved or used to repay existing debt.

Of those who intend to save all or most of their windfalls, three fifths said they will hold their shares in their own name while 16 per cent will use the tax-free shelter of a personal equity plan (Pep) or invest the sale proceeds in a Pep, unit trust or other stock market vehicle. A further 17 per cent said they will sell their shares and hold the proceeds on deposit with a bank or building society.

If the survey respondents stick to their plans the Pep and unit industry could see £4 billion worth of new business, with a similar figure flowing into bank and building society accounts.

Customer loyalty towards the converted institutions remained strong even in the case of the Alliance & Leicester, said Mintel.

Hugh Pye, banking analyst at Robert Fleming Securities, said: "The survey addresses the concerns in some quarters that the 'converted' societies will lose substantial amounts of deposits after flotation."

Mr Pye continued: "According to our findings, customer loyalty is strong in the case of the Halifax and Woolwich but rather weaker for the Alliance & Leicester which issued its members with the same number of shares regardless of the amount on deposit."

Newman Tonks in fees row

NEWMAN TONKS, the lock specialist taken over by Ingersoll Rand earlier this year, is being sued for £2.3 million by an American financial adviser in a dispute over the non-payment of fees for introducing the two (Fraser Nelson writes).

Kensington Organization says it lost out on its 1 per cent cut when initial merger talks, which it helped to arrange, were cancelled in 1992.

It claims Newman Tonks revived the old contacts to escape a £118 million hostile bid from FKI last Christmas, but refused to honour the original payment deal.

Ingersoll Rand has until Wednesday to pay the £2.3 million, or agree to a formal battle in the High Court. It declined to comment.

CHANGE ON WEEK

US dollar

1.6083 (+0.0306)

German mark

2.9273 (+0.0024)

Exchange index

102.1 (+0.8)

Bank of England official close (4pm)

FT 30 share

3143.3 (-73.0)

FTSE 100

4885.8 (-165.5)

New York Dow Jones

7694.86 (-336.56)

Tokyo Nikkei Ave

19326.03 (-278.43)



Richard Purdey, Merrydown chairman, may use the annual meeting to announce the departure of another director

Merrydown boss likely to stay on

By Dominic Walsh

RICHARD PURDEY, chairman of Merrydown, the troubled cider and alcopops maker, is unlikely to stand down at the company's annual meeting today but may announce the departure of another director, industry sources said last night.

Mr Purdey has come under pressure in recent months in the wake of a slump in sales of the company's Two Dogs alcoholic lemonade. Last month, he unveiled a drop in pre-tax profits for the year from £2.03 million to just £821,000 after Two Dogs failed to come to terms with competitors. Merrydown has handed dis-

tribution of Two Dogs to Scottish & Newcastle and Mr Purdey has promised to streamline the board as part of a £1.5 million cost-cutting exercise. At the time of the results he refused to guarantee even his own job and analysts had expected him to announce at the annual meeting that he was taking early retirement.

Industry experts now say he is keen to see through the changes and return the company to a more stable position before standing aside.

Shortly after the results, Alan Rutherford, sales and marketing director, became the first boardroom casualty.

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET

1997 High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd +/-	Ytd %	P/E	1997 High	Low	Mid cap (million)	Price pence	Wtd +/-	Ytd %	P/E
130	100	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
135	105	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
140	110	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
145	115	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
150	120	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
155	125	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
160	130	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
165	135	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
170	140	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
175	145	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
180	150	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
185	155	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
190	160	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
195	165	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
200	170	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
205	175	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
210	180	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
215	185	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
220	190	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
225	195	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
230	200	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
235	205	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
240	210	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
245	215	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
250	220	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
255	225	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
260	230	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
265	235	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
270	240	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
275	245	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
280	250	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
285	255	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
290	260	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
295	265	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
300	270	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
305	275	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
310	280	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
315	285	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
320	290	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
325	295	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
330	300	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
335	305	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
340	310	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
345	315	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
350	320	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
355	325	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
360	330	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
365	335	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
370	340	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
375	345	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
380	350	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
385	355	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
390	360	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
395	365	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
400	370	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
405	375	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
410	380	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
415	385	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
420	390	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
425	395	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
430	400	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
435	405	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
440	410	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
445	415	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
450	420	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
455	425	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.9	11.7
460	430	11.50	110	...	5.5	10.2	350	140	3.50	150	...	1.	



John Roberts says that the Post Office faces a two-pronged attack — from changing technology and ever-sharpening international competition

Overhaul at Post Office must deliver the goods

Philip Bassett assesses potential changes as the Government's review reaches its second stage

For the Conservatives, there was one way — privatisation. For previous Labour administrations, there was another — full public ownership. But for the new Labour Government there is to be a third way, a new approach that will "dynamise" what ministers regard as a commercial and social success that has been politically blighted for too long — the Post Office.

In the rash of reviews that followed Labour's election, ministers announced a review of the Post Office. Significantly, though, their intention was not to examine what its future should be, but to determine how best to give it the commercial freedom for which it has long argued.

The first stage of the Post Office review is now completed. Led by Ian McCartney, the Industry Minister, the Department of Trade and Industry review team has finished taking evidence from all sides.

Ministers and the review team are now starting the review's second stage — assessing the evidence. Their intention is not necessarily to come up with a single, all-encompassing solution. "It's not going to be a big bang," said one DTI insider.

Instead, there is likely to be what the department is calling a "rolling programme" of proposals for the Post Office.

starting towards the end of the year, but stretching well beyond that.

The problems facing the Post Office are clear. Its leaders, such as the chief executive John Roberts, emphasise the twin threats to its business: changing technology, with faxes, courier services and e-mail either commonplace or growing rapidly; and ever-sharpening international competition with the Dutch and German postal services, which now have well-established operations in Britain.

At the same time, Treasury demands on the Post Office for cash are increasingly onerous. External financing limit (EFL) payments to the Government from the highly profitable Post Office — last month it announced its 20th successive year of subsidy-free profit — are set over the next three years to equal the total of annual targets set by the Treasury for the last six.

But the new Labour Government cannot afford to get the Post Office wrong. After two decades of making money

without drawing a penny down from the State, it cannot be allowed to perform worse than that under Labour.

As *The Times* disclosed today, ministers are examining some radical options about what to do, including imaginative ideas about some form of employee ownership in the Post Office.

They are clear, though, about some basics: that they are not talking about privatisation, that they do not want to

ing Post Office employees out of the public sector pay net, since its managers have told the Government that they believe their staff are underpaid in comparison with other communication workers; and introducing some form of employee ownership to encourage the workforce.

Ministers like the idea — although the Treasury, while aware of the need to re-examine the way the PSBR operates, is wary of anything that will reduce the flow of money from the Post Office cash cow into the Government's coffers, and is making that point quite clear in the current review.

Ministers are particularly aware of the need to improve employee relations and of the danger that the review could be thrown off course if muttered suggestions within the CWU of postal strikes in the run-up to Christmas become reality.

DTI insiders say that the Post Office and the union "have lost faith" in one another. Certainly, the abrupt departure at the election of Alan Johnson, CWU joint general secretary, who was parachuted into his Hull West & Hesle seat at a late stage by the Labour leadership, has thrown the union further into turmoil, after deep internal divisions which emerged over the handling of last year's strikes.

Derek Hodgson, the current acting joint general secretary, is set to fight for the sole leadership of the union with its other joint general secretary, Tony Young, in the new year, and commentators believe that much of the CWU's current stances are reflecting pre-campaign electoral manoeuvring.

If there are fresh strikes later this year, then the Government is likely to see them as a key test of its mettle, and

face them down. Post Office leaders are concerned that a clash of this sort would deter any new potential commercial partners, and see other forms of communication improve their market share, at the expense of the Post Office. Its managers talk of trying to "stabilise" industrial relations this year.

Ministers want a restart, a new way. Sir Michael Heron, the Post Office's chairman, is to leave his job at the end of the year, and ministers want to use the appointment of his successor as an opportunity to bring in someone wholly committed to a new way forward, someone who will bring in the changes both they and the Post Office believe it needs.

They are doubtful in any case that they could find someone to chair the Post Office on any other basis than a new framework. In line with this, ministers are continuing to hold up the appointment of three new executive directors, and a new non-executive board member.

So when ministers and officials return to Whitehall from their summer holidays, the stage is set for the Post Office finally to break out of what it feels has for far too long been an operational straitjacket.

Both the DTI's Ian McCartney and the Post Office's John Roberts are set to give evidence in public in the autumn to an inquiry into the Post Office by the Commons' all-party Trade and Industry Select Committee — a neat move that will concentrate minds all round on the Post Office's future.

But with the possible exception of the Post Office's main trade union, all sides are now broadly agreed on the direction in which the Post Office should move.

Ministers believe that it has been held back from developing its full potential, both domestically and internationally, and they are determined to alter that.

As one DTI insider puts it: "The Post Office has been left in limbo for too long. That limbo may well be about to change."

6 The Government is likely to see strikes as a key test and will face them down



Alan Johnson's departure at the election has thrown the CWU into further turmoil

TELEVISION CHOICE

Solvent case unresolved

Citizen's Arrest
Channel 4, 8.00pm

David Seaman (not the goalkeeper) had his health ruined in an industrial accident which left him brain-damaged and partially blinded. He has found it difficult to hold down relationships and does not expect to work again. He is convinced that he was poisoned by a chemical solvent, trichloroethylene, more commonly known as triel. But his employer, refused to accept liability and the Health and Safety Executive, the government body concerned with safety at work, also rejected his claim. With the help of Joe Layburn, the *Citizen's Arrest* presenter, he finds a solvent expert in Sweden who upholds his contention that triel was the culprit. With this information Seaman confronts the company boss and the doctor from the HSE. But once again this programme seems better at airing grievances than resolving them.

Short Stories: Tough Going
Channel 4, 8.30pm

Wolverhampton, on the last Sunday in January is the location for a curious ritual in which 2,000 people willingly put themselves through hell. It is a cross-country race, but not the usual sort. After five miles of conventional running the competitors have to submit themselves to a series of tests such as climbing over barbed wire, crawling through tunnels and under barbed wire and wading across icy water. Debbie Stutter's film follows three of these foolhardy souls and hears what makes them do it. Ann, a housewife, is on her third race and says it is about the exhilaration of meeting a challenge. Eddie and Kate, a young couple, are taking part for the first time. Working shifts means that they do not see much of each other. Tackling the race together ensures that they will, though it seems like an extreme measure.

All Mod Cons: The Outside Room
BBC2, 9.30pm

How is this for an opening gambit? "The most minimal game designer this century was Adolf Hitler." As an audience grabber it is brilliant. You have to stay tuned to discover what they are talking about. Nobody is pretending that Hitler was a German. Gertrude Jekyll. But it is fair for the



Gartside and Flynn (BBC1, 10pm)

programme to say that for six years he filled British gardens with Anderson shelters and duffel coats of vegetables. Having been round the house, this admirable series now goes outside. Its history of wartime and post-war gardening will be achingly nostalgic to those of a certain age and an eye-opener to the young. From Mr Middleton and Percy Thrower, giants of the airwaves, to Harry Wheatcroft, the bewhiskered rose expert, by way of DOD and the rise of the garden centre, all horticultural life is here.

Preston Front
BBC1, 10.00pm

We are assured that this is the final series of Tim Firth's idiosyncratic comedy so we must enjoy it while it is still here. It has developed into one of the most original dramas of recent years, winning a faithful audience and a clutch of awards. The quality of the show comes from Firth's writing, which is rooted in the real world, but has a novelist's insight. The dialogue is so rich that sentence after sentence can be quoted for its droll, understated humour. And the jokes are always there to illuminate the characters. Although Colin Buchanan's *Hodge* remains the pivot, the ensemble cast means that others can have their time in the spotlight. Tonight it is the turn of Ally (Kate Garside) who has just split from her husband and is feeling vengeful. The TA's annual dinner provides a perfect stage. Peter Waymark

RADIO PHONE

Interval: Northern Lights
Radio 3, 11.35am

The partial overlap between the Fronts and the Edinburgh Festival at this time in August offers a rich choice of features from both. The feature in the festival series appears at an odd time because it had to be postponed last week, so now it is transmitted not in the evening Proms interval but in the afternoon between two unrelated programmes. Not to worry; a frank discussion programme that dissects Edinburgh's raison d'être during the festival's 50th anniversary is a welcome change from luvvies salivating over each other, and Colin Bell is a presenter who can be relied upon to ask the right questions. Of course Edinburgh must and will continue, but there are those who would advocate a change of focus.

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe and Boy Lard 8.00 Simon Mayo 11.30 Radio 1 Breakfast 12.30pm Newsweek 1.30pm The 12.30pm News 2.00pm Nicky Campbell 4.00 Kevin Greening 6.15pm Newsweek 6.30pm Evening Special 8.00pm Live Music Update 8.40pm Andy Kershaw 10.30pm Mary Ann Hobbs 1.00pm Claire Squires 4.00pm Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Alex Leslie 7.30pm Sarah Kennedy 9.30pm Ken Bruce 11.30pm Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.00pm Ed Stewart 5.00pm John Peel 7.00pm The 7.00pm News 8.00pm The 8.00pm News 9.00pm Big Band Special 9.30pm The 9.30pm News 10.30pm The 10.30pm News 11.30pm The 11.30pm News 12.00am Steve Meddian 3.00pm Patrick Lint

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00pm Breakfast Programme 8.00pm The Magazine 12.00pm Midday with Mark 2.00pm Radio 5 News 4.00pm The 4.00pm News 5.00pm The 5.00pm News 6.00pm The 6.00pm News 7.00pm The 7.00pm News 8.00pm The 8.00pm News 9.00pm The 9.00pm News 10.00pm The 10.00pm News 11.00pm The 11.00pm News 12.00pm The 12.00pm News 1.00pm The 1.00pm News 2.00pm The 2.00pm News 3.00pm The 3.00pm News 4.00pm The 4.00pm News 5.00pm The 5.00pm News 6.00pm The 6.00pm News 7.00pm The 7.00pm News 8.00pm The 8.00pm News 9.00pm The 9.00pm News 10.00pm The 10.00pm News 11.00pm The 11.00pm News 12.00pm The 12.00pm News 1.00pm The 1.00pm News 2.00pm The 2.00pm News 3.00pm The 3.00pm News 4.00pm The 4.00pm News 5.00pm The 5.00pm News 6.00pm The 6.00pm News 7.00pm The 7.00pm News 8.00pm The 8.00pm News 9.00pm The 9.00pm News 10.00pm The 10.00pm News 11.00pm The 11.00pm News 12.00pm The 12.00pm News 1.00pm The 1.00pm News 2.00pm The 2.00pm News 3.00pm The 3.00pm News 4.00pm The 4.00pm News 5.00pm The 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COMPANIES 40

The Halifax
and that
little Xtra cash

BUSINESS

BOOM BUST 41

Roger Bootle
on why this
time is different



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY AUGUST 18 1997

National Grid ready to float Energis before end of the year

By ERIC REGULY

ENERGIS, the telecommunications arm of the National Grid, will probably be floated before the end of the year unless the stock markets crack, David Jones, the Grid's chief executive, said yesterday.

Mr Jones, an Energis director, said the Grid would sell no more than 49 per cent of Energis because it was confident of the business's long-term prospects and did

not want to lose control. He said: "The only problem we have with Energis is that its value is not reflected in the Grid's share price." He emphasised, however, that the Grid board had not yet decided whether to proceed with flotation and that other scenarios, although less likely, were not being ruled out. A demerger was one.

Analysts estimated that a flotation would value Energis at between £800 million and £1.2 billion, a figure that Mr

Jones would neither confirm nor deny. Using a mid-range valuation, flotation could raise almost £500 million for the Grid. Dresner Kleinwort Benson is acting as the Grid's financial adviser.

Energis was launched in early 1993 as a low-cost alternative to the national transmission systems owned by British Telecom and Mercury Communications. No digging was required to build the Energis network: high-capacity fibre-

optic cables were simply placed underneath the Grid's electricity pylons.

The Grid has invested about £575 million in Energis, a figure that includes switching technology. The network is considered among the most advanced in the world and has enough capacity for multimedia applications such as video and the Internet.

Energis got off to a slow start, partly because enough national capacity existed

at the time to meet the country's transmission needs and partly because it offered extremely low prices to its first customers, including the BBC. Original forecasts called for profits last year; in fact, it reported an operating loss of £52.4 million on turnover of £97.1 million.

In an effort to reduce financial risk, the Grid tried, but failed, to find a partner for Energis. The telecoms company has since won an international licence and recruit-

ed more customers as demand for so-called broadband capacity increases. Analysts said that Energis already carried more than half of the country's Internet traffic, the fastest growing part of the telecoms market.

Mr Jones said that Energis was on the verge of reporting profits before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation. A new marketing plan is to be unveiled shortly.

City braced for shares to fall again

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

BLUE CHIP shares are likely to open a further 1 per cent lower in London this morning as market-makers cut prices of leading stocks in the hope of enticing buyers before New York opens.

Their success, along with investors' appetite for price discounts in European and American markets, will determine whether the long global bull market can continue, or will end with a sharp reversal.

Sharp falls are likely in Paris, Milan and some other continental markets that were closed on Friday. But Hong Kong, which saw a big fall then, is closed today.

The FTSE 100 index fell 2.8 per cent on Friday, ending at its lowest for the day. But losses in New York doubled after London had closed and the Dow Jones industrial average eventually lost 3.1 per cent, making a two-week drop of 6.1 per cent.

Wall Street stocks have dipped sharply at the end of two successive weeks, underlining the volatility of financial markets in thin August trading. On Friday, in both London and New York, index options also expired, withdrawing technical support.

Volatile share prices this month have taken their cue from the foreign exchanges, where the dollar and sterling first surged against the mark

and then retreated in thin speculative trading. Currency waves affected bonds, which in turn drove shares.

On Friday, however, there were signs of a more basic change of sentiment to US equities. Anxious equity investors switched to bonds, leaving their prices higher on the day. Last week, more than \$300 million is also reported to have flowed out of mutual funds, the driving force behind the share boom.

American shares have risen 22 per cent since mid-March, when the Federal Reserve Board last raised short-term interest rates. Traders are now looking more nervously to this week's meeting of the Fed's rate-setting open market com-

mittee, which begins tomorrow. No rise in rates is likely, however, after several statistics confirming that inflation and wage growth remain low.

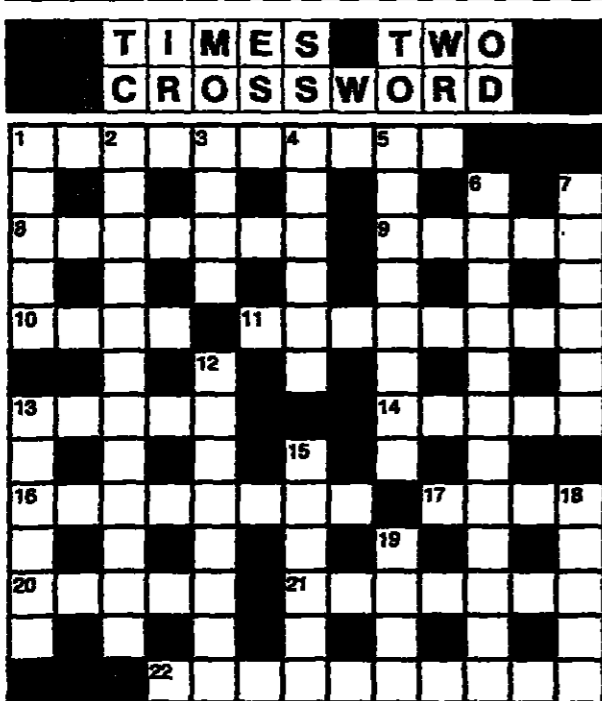
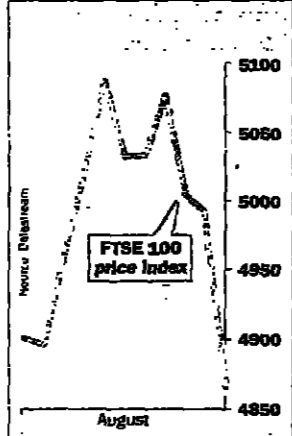
US shares have historically high ratings, selling at an average 25 times earnings and yielding 1.5 per cent dividends. Shares in the FTSE 100 sell at an average 18 times earnings and yield 3.4 per cent.

Bears of Wall Street, who include nearly all UK fund managers, argue that interest rates have not gone up because the economy and profits growth are slackening. Coca-Cola and Gillette disappointed in the past six trading days.

In the UK too, blue chips have been buoyed by international buying. The FTSE 100 index of the biggest companies is up 18 per cent this year, even though the strength of sterling has shrunk forecasts of profit growth and short-term interest rates have gone up.

Most other UK shares have scarcely risen at all this year however. The Bank of England also made clear last week that it did not intend to change interest rates again before November, giving further support to the share market.

London will be undermined if the mark surges back against sterling. The Bundesbank, which has expressed anxiety over the mark, meets on Thursday and could allow its market interest rate to rise. The mark's recovery makes this less likely.



No 1175

ACROSS

- 1 Forked (10)
8 Blade attached to rifle (7)
9 Throttle (5)
10 Dame - Everage (4)
11 Calm; made up (5)
13 (Im)proved for the occasion (2,3)
14 Drab, unflattering (dress) (5)
16 In permitted fashion (5)
17 Food (slang) larva (4)
20 GC Island (5)
21 Ready, compliant (7)
22 Antithesis (10)

DOWN

- 1 Holy book (5)
2 Unseen observer (3,2,3,4)
3 S African currency (4)
4 Deed (6)
5 Jape (8)
6 New-home party (5-7)
7 (One's) prime (6)
12 Robert and Clara - 19C composers (8)
13 On fire (6)
15 Explode (4,2)
18 Start: late Israeli PM (5)
19 Aspiration (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1174

- ACROSS: 1 Circus 4 Fright 5 Sisk 9 Prestoria 10 Ipsa facto 13 Uncle 15 Bliss 16 Coward 18 Imprecise 21 Forsaken 22 Gait 25 Redden 24 Writer
DOWN: 1 Cosmic 2 Rickshaw 3 Sepia 5 Retroussé 6 Garb 7 Trance 11 Fabricate 12 Crisp 14 Claimant 16 Conifer 17 Fester 19 Renew 20 Prod

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Young strike gold in Silicon Valley

Every day last year 62 millionaires were created as the valley's high-tech firms went public, writes Ian Brodie

SIXTY-TWO millionaires were made every day last year in Silicon Valley, the land of the modern California Gold Rush. A survey shows that these astonishing riches were the result of one high-tech company going public, on average, every five days, raising billions and billions of dollars.

There are now 7,000 high-tech firms crammed into the 50-mile corridor running south from San Francisco. The market value of publicly held companies in and around the valley has reached \$450 billion (£280 billion), close to that of the entire French stock market.

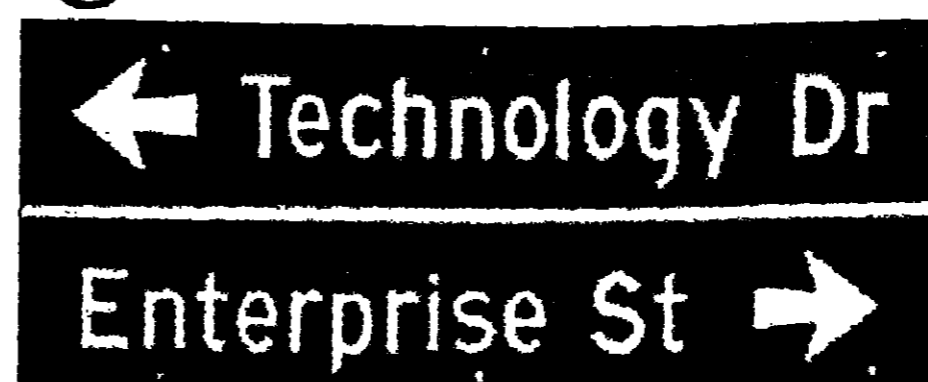
These statistics come from the American magazine *Business Week* in a special issue marking the 40th anniversary of Silicon Valley's debut. The boom is described as the largest single creation of

wealth and economic activity ever seen in such a short period of time. The quest began in 1957 when the so-called Traitorous Eight walked out of laboratories run by William Shockley, the British-born inventor of the transistor. They founded Fairchild Semiconductor, the first company to work exclusively in silicon.

As *Business Week* puts it, in Silicon Valley millionaires are as typical as a sunny day. Risks are great, but the rewards can be amazing. In 1993, Heather Beach started as a receptionist for Siebel Systems Inc, makers of sales information software. One of five employees, she was the dogbody doing everything from answering phones to ordering office supplies.

Then 25, she reckoned she had a chance of becoming a millionaire by 30. Four years later she has surpassed her wildest expectations. She did so by choosing to take some of her salary in equity on top of the stock options she was granted. Siebel went public in June last year at \$17 a share and more than quadrupled by December. For every dollar

Ms Beach took in shares instead of cash, she earned at least \$40. She has celebrated with a pair of rollerblades and a new bed, but like a surprising number of the valley's newly minted young millionaires she is too busy for the wealth to change her life. Many invest in retirement accounts, but later take some to buy a home.



Sign of the times: street directions reflect the business culture that rules the valley

In the smartest neighbourhoods, "starter" houses go for \$800,000. Anything more comfortable is in the \$2 million range. The ultra-rich buy undeveloped property to park their helicop-

ters. "Keeping up with the neighbours in Silicon Valley is weird," said one chief executive. "It's not 'Do your kids go to a private school?' but 'Do they have a private jet?'"

Eleven new firms start up each week and many fail. But every would-be entrepreneur is driven by the legend of Apple, started in a Silicon Valley 20 years ago by Steven Jobs and Stephen Wozniak with \$1,300.

Silicon Valley's vitality and stock-option culture might be the quintessence of the American dream, but the wealth does not trickle down. Thou-

sands of caretakers, postmen and other low-income workers have to go up to 90 miles away to find affordable housing. There are chief executives earning \$10,000 a day, but their office cleaners get \$8 an hour.

Much of the valley's energy is driven by venture capitalists, people like Ann Winblad, who has her own firm and is one of the few to invest only in software. She has spotted several winners and attributes her success to "networking" that takes her to industry events four evenings a week. Venture capitalists are

in fierce competition, constantly bumping into each other at the same haunts as they try to seal the deal of the day.

Lawyers who know the ins and out of patents and start-ups are in heavy demand. With the touch of a button, boilerplate stock-option plans and prospectuses roll out of word processors at law firms like instant company-making machines.

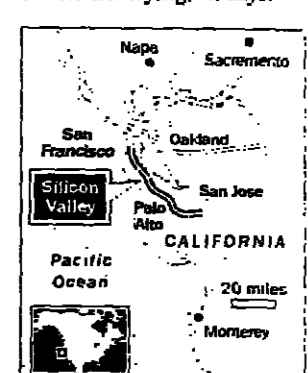
Many success stories are immigrants for whom Silicon Valley is a level playing field. As a youngster growing up in Delhi, Samir Arora was always drawn to America and set off in 1986. It was a bad beginning. All his belongings were stolen and he spent six months bagging groceries in a supermarket before landing a job at Apple Computer Inc.

Nearly two years ago, he founded Net-Objects Inc., making software for the Internet. In March, IBM invested \$100 million for a half-share, making Mr Arora, 31, an instant multi-millionaire after ten years of trying. The ranks of Silicon Valley millionaires have expanded by many thousands since 1994, according to Payment Systems

Inc. Some 50,000 jobs were created last year while wages grew at five per cent, five times the national average.

"There's an elixir that you breathe as you come to this part of the world," said Christos Cossakos, chief executive of an online brokerage group which went public last summer, raising \$46 million. "This is Mecca," he said.

The survey concludes that Silicon Valley is perhaps the most unusual business environment on the planet. "It is a daredevil business, where risk-taking is the norm and the penalty is not for failure, but for not trying," it says.



Arafat makes threat to drop peace accords

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

YASSIR ARAFAT has threatened for the first time to abandon the peace accords with Israel as the Palestinian Authority launched a boycott of Israeli products.

The moves are in protest against Israeli sanctions imposed on the Palestinians after a double suicide bombing in Jerusalem more than two weeks ago. The PLO leader said he was still committed to peace, but if necessary the Palestinians were ready to give up everything achieved since the peace accords were signed in 1993 and return to the struggles of the past.

"We are willing to wipe it all out and start anew," he said in an address to academics and journalists in Nablus. Last night Israeli and Palestinian officials were due to meet in Ramallah, also in the West Bank, in the presence of CIA representatives. The talks were part of a trilateral framework established during the recent visit to the Middle East by Dennis Ross, the US special envoy.

Khaled Ismail, Mr Arafat's economic adviser, said that a plan had been developed grad-

ually to close the Palestinian market to Israeli products. He said the Israelis could not expect to sell their goods to Palestinians at the same time as they were withholding tax revenue from the Palestinian Authority. Mr Ismail said that the boycott would be selective and gradual, starting with a ban on the purchase of non-essential goods.

Mr Arafat said that Israel's economic sanctions, particularly the withholding of \$49 million in taxes and customs duties, were meant to "humiliate the Palestinian people and make them kneel". But the tactic would not work. "The Palestinian people will not kneel to anyone but God," he said.

Mr Arafat said that Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, should learn the true nature of the Palestinian people, adding that his followers would not bow to Israeli pressures to arrest known Islamic extremists in the Palestinian self-rule areas. "We reject the Israeli demands that we act against our brethren and do not intend to accept dictates on this from anyone."

Mr Arafat then ridiculed Israel, referring to the Jewish

state as "greater Micronesia". He counted the countries that had voted against a United Nations General Assembly resolution in April condemning the construction of a new Jewish neighbourhood in east Jerusalem. In conclusion, he said, the world responded by a vote of 134 to 3: "Micronesia, Greater Micronesia, and America". The same three nations voted for a similar resolution in July.

Mr Arafat said that, while he did not accept the Israeli demands for stronger security co-operation, there was clear evidence that the Palestinian Authority did not tolerate lawlessness. He pointed to the arrest over the weekend of three Palestinian car thieves and their prompt conviction for the murder of an Israeli taxi driver from Jerusalem, whose body was found dumped in a cistern in Jericho.

Two Palestinians were sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour and the third, a minor, was jailed for 15 years. "We implement Palestinian law, but not the dictates," he said. "This is the main basis we had agreed upon with the Israelis and the Americans before."

Yossi Sidon, the Israeli



Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Prime Minister, tries to relax with his wife, Sara, and son, Avner, on a Mediterranean beach at Caesarea. However, relaxation perhaps is not particularly easy for a family that is always surrounded by security men

police commander, described the murder of Shmuel Ben-Baruch, the taxi driver, as criminal and a terrorist act. Betty Ben-Baruch, the driver's wife, said: "If they just wanted him live." A few hours before

the funeral yesterday, she said that in recent years her husband had grown more sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. "I want the Palestinian people to know that he loved Arabs and I hope that their conscience will not allow them to

kill again," she told Israel radio.

David Bar-Ilan, a senior adviser to Mr Netanyahu, said the arrests of the killers showed that the Palestinian Authority was capable of quick action "when it wants

to", adding: "This is an example of what we expect the authority to do in the future in all security cases."

Despite the public hostility between Israel and the Palestinians, the two sides were showing some signs of prag-

matism behind the scenes. Last night's planned meeting in Ramallah was a direct product of Mr Ross's five-day visit to the region last week in an attempt to promote security co-operation between the two sides.

Drive for reform begins to falter

FROM RICHARD BRESTON IN MOSCOW

ONLY three months after President Yeltsin launched a campaign to tackle the age-old scourge of corruption in Russia, the initiative to clean up government appears, like so many other efforts before it, to be going nowhere.

In May this year the Kremlin leader, under the influence of Boris Nemtsov, his young and energetic Deputy Prime

RUSSIA

Minister, signed a presidential decree designed to stamp out bribe-taking and embezzlement from the top ranks of government. Under the order, the country's most senior 500 officials were instructed to declare their income and wealth.

But as senior figures began to disclose their assets, the exercise appeared to become more and more divorced from reality.

While the failure of the initiative is greeted with a shrug of resignation by most Russians, foreign investors say that, if the problem is not dealt with, it will damage the country's long-term prospects for economic recovery.

Billions in loans used as weapon to defeat Third World's graft

BY IAN BRODIE

THE World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are clamping down on releasing money to corrupt governments.

The crackdown reflects their determination, too long delayed, to withhold loans from countries where corruption and bribery are so pervasive that they act as a drag on economic development.

The World Bank has suspended operations in several countries on the ground that its money cannot reach ordinary people because of an institutional maze of fraud and bribery. The targeted nations include Nigeria, Sudan and Afghanistan.

Early this month the IMF sent the Kenyan shilling and Nairobi stock market into a tailspin when it suspended a loan of \$220 million (£138 million) to Kenya after President Moi failed to create a new anti-corruption authority demanded by the fund. Kenya had also refused to reinstate Samuel Chebbi, who had been dismissed as Commissioner for Customs and Excise. His reputation for fighting graft had apparently incurred the Government's displeasure.

The World Bank has recently delayed smaller loans to Kenya over concerns about persistent corruption in the regime of Mr Moi who has been in power since 1978.

The IMF had been irritated with Kenya before over what

officials describe as a clearly fraudulent diversion of its export incentive funds to a business selling gold and diamonds, neither of which Kenya produces.

Last year the IMF halted a \$120 million loan to Cambodia for six months after promised government revenues from logging concessions mysteriously failed to materialise.

The campaign to stamp out corruption began in earnest at last September's meeting of the world's finance ministers when James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, and Jean-Michel Camdessus, managing director of the IMF, announced that for the first time they would use the leverage of their loans to poorer nations to insist on better governance. At their meeting



Camdessus: rule of law essential to confidence

in Hong Kong next month the finance ministers will hear that both the institutions are keeping their word.

Two weeks ago the IMF executive board issued guidelines spelling out how it will deal with crooked regimes seeking loans. They were alerted to expect emphatic demands for the elimination of bribery, corruption and fraud in the management of public resources.

M Camdessus promised that the IMF would not veer from its main focus of encouraging and advising client countries to expand trade, reduce inflation and undertake market reforms. But increasingly, he said, the IMF finds that enforcing the rule of law and tackling corruption are essential for fostering confidence in the private sector and enabling Third World economies to prosper.

An example of how the IMF interprets its new mandate was this month's successful loaning to Romania to cancel a proposed purchase of 96 Cobra attack helicopters from America at a cost of \$1 billion. The IMF argued that the deal would upset economic reforms and divert funds from health and education programmes. The fund said these were greater priorities than costly weapons in the transition to capitalism.

Leading article, page 19

Mandela's men quick to learn old ways

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

IN South Africa the corruption culture has its roots in the institutionalised lawlessness of apartheid. But the African National Congress Government appears quickly to have learnt old tricks and there is increasing alarm about corruption's spread in public life.

A recent survey showed the country is perceived by international business firms as more and more corruption-prone. It placed South Africa 33rd on a table of 52, lower

SOUTH AFRICA

even than some countries in Eastern Europe after communism. Close on the heels of that survey earlier this month, the National Party released its "corruption barometer" which claimed that 20 billion rands (about £3 billion) has disappeared through corruption since the ANC took power. Accusing the ANC of attempting to dodge the issue, the party challenged President Mandela to put the prevention of public service corruption in the same category as the prevention of other crimes.

Martikus van Schalkwyk, a party spokesman, said corruption was out of control, leading to the "institutional collapse of the public sector and seriously tarnishing South Africa's image".

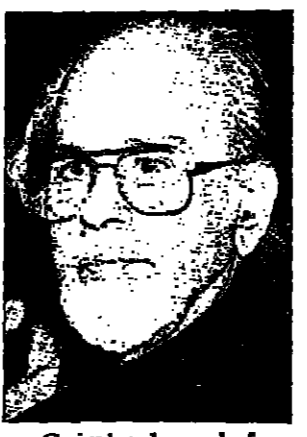
INDIA AND PAKISTAN MPs at heart of corruption

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDER Kumar Gujral, the Indian Prime Minister, is taking unprecedented steps to combat corruption, three days after calling for a mass movement against public fraud. He said he was ashamed that India was listed among the world's ten most corrupt countries.

He urged businessmen to give him the names of corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. "I promise support and protection. I will not expose you," he told the Confederation of Indian Industry. "I know you give money to government officials. You tell me this privately, but lose courage in naming the officials."

He has also established a special unit in the Prime Minister's Office to deal with complaints of corruption against Cabinet ministers, MPs and senior bureaucrats.



Gujral: ashamed of massive corruption

The system is so deeply rooted, however, that Mr Gujral may find it all but impossible to pick off a few powerful individuals without causing ructions at the highest levels of bureaucracy. Mr Gujral noted that poor people suffered from corruption, too — because an estimated 85 per cent of funds for anti-poverty schemes went missing.

Corruption became rooted under the Government of Indira Gandhi, and almost every Prime Minister since then has left office with a sullied reputation. It costs a lot of money to get elected to parliament — vote banks are bought from caste leaders and influential people within the party must be bribed — and politicians are preoccupied with recouping their investment as quickly as they can.

The situation is worse in Pakistan, the most corrupt country after Nigeria, according to the German-based Transparency International. Politicians owe millions of pounds borrowed from nationalised banks. Few MPs bother to pay electricity or gas bills, and 95 per cent of people pay no taxes. Seventy per cent of government revenues come from the Karachi business community, without which the country would collapse.

The Government has launched an "accountability" process, in which corrupt politicians are to be brought to book, but it has become something of a joke.

Few go to jail in clean-up campaign

BY RICHARD OWEN

ITALIAN public life has been dogged by corruption since the Second World War, when Christian Democrat-dominated governments held sway almost continuously for four decades, creating a cosy relationship between the administration and big business. The influence of the Mafia has also corrupted politics.

A number of former Prime Ministers are under investigation for alleged corruption, including Giulio Andreotti, Bettino Craxi — who fled to

ITALY

Tunisia to avoid a jail sentence — and Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon.

The climate changed in 1992, when Milan-based magistrates led by Antonio Di Pietro launched the "Clean Hands" campaign. Hundreds of officials and businessmen were arrested or questioned, and the investigations exposed a huge and tangled network of bribes, or *tangenti*. On the other hand only a handful of politicians and businessmen have served jail sentences and the public has grown weary of what some see as a zealous and puritanical campaign.

Moreover, Signor Di Pietro, still widely admired, is under investigation for alleged misconduct and acceptance of bribes while a magistrate — which he denies.



Clive Stafford Smith and his girlfriend, Emily Bolton, who works at the Louisiana Crisis Assistance Centre, the charity he runs in New Orleans

The great defender

The death row rescuer Clive Stafford Smith wants to come home – as an MP. Interview by Tom Rhodes

On an average day, Clive Stafford Smith is to be found fretting over his trial documents in a cheap motel in rural Louisiana. For 14 years he has criss-crossed America, enduring an endless round of courts, harsh judges and seedy motels, to say nothing of soul-destroying visits to the hundreds of clients he has represented on death row.

In that time the British lawyer – once described as a latter-day Galahad in search of an improbable grail, the abolition of capital punishment in America – has become one of the most celebrated crusaders against the death penalty.

But the constant opposition, the meagre salary and the weight of his responsibility finally appear to have taken their toll. The former public schoolboy, who left his homeland more than 20 years ago, is talking for the first time about life back in the bosom of the Establishment he thought he had deserted.

He is planning to abandon the bleak compounds of Parchman and Angola, the notorious death row jails of Mississippi and Louisiana, for an altogether different constituency. Mr Stafford Smith wants to become an MP in Tony Blair's Labour Party. He has made inquiries and there has been some interest.

The process has been a gradual one but the final decision came on the night of Labour's victory as he watched the results on television at his half-renovated mansion in the dilapidated Lower Garden District of New Orleans.

"There was this sudden sense of change, that perhaps I could contribute in some way," he says. "It had been something I had considered for some time because I seriously believe I could bring something to British politics under a Labour Government."

At first glance his liberal ideology hardly seems to match that of new Labour's Young Turks.

And he is, after all, something of a single-issue man, having devoted his adult life to a goal with apparently little relevance to Britain, where the death penalty was abolished in the 1950s.

Mr Stafford Smith disagrees. "The death penalty is just a microcosm of much bigger social problems," he says. "I want people in Britain to realise how lucky they are and to prevent the hysteria that has seized this country from catching on at home."

He had gone to America as an unusually idealistic product of the public school system. A captain of rugby at Radley and later head boy, he had turned down a place at Cambridge in favour of a scholarship to study journalism at the University of North Carolina.

Mr Stafford Smith has previously said he found his

calling during a history lesson at the age of seven when he learnt about Joan of Arc's burning at the stake. The reality is a little different. He is loath to discuss what appears to have been a difficult divorce for his parents. Mr Stafford Smith was clearly looking for a way out when he first read of the death penalty while still a teenager at Radley.

He says: "It gave me this sense of the overwhelming power of the State and of everyone somehow glorifying in what to me seemed like a pagan ritual. I wanted to change that."

During the university summers, he visited prisoners on death row in Georgia, becoming close to those who spent 23 hours a day in their cells, their lives merely a long parade of last-minute appeals.

His mind made up, he gained a scholarship to study law at Columbia University in New York, later returning to the South to take his Bar exams in Louisiana. He started as a state defender on the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta, where he stayed for ten years.

It was the early 1980s and there were perhaps 1,500 people on death row. Mr Stafford Smith soon achieved notoriety as a defender cap-

able of overturning sentences. Today, four years after Mr Stafford Smith moved to New Orleans, the liberal appointees of Jimmy Carter have been replaced at the Supreme Court by those of Ronald Reagan and the number of prisoners facing capital punishment has more than doubled. Thirty-nine states, including liberal New York, now have the death penalty.

A clutch of committed fellow lawyers and numerous volunteers – including Emily Bolton, his girlfriend, a former Amnesty International employee – have since joined the Louisiana Crisis Assistance Centre, the charity he runs in New Orleans. Its name, chosen to avoid the death threats and firebombs that are the most evident disadvantages of fighting capital punishment among the rednecks of the Deep South, belies a slick operation which has earned the respect of the legal community throughout America.

Fortunately, the overheads are small. He pays himself just \$25,000 (less than £15,000) a year – a month's earnings for many of his contemporaries from Columbia – but is happy in the knowledge that he has rescued more than 200 people from execution.

It is those he has lost, however, who prey most on his mind. Last month Joseph O'Dell was executed by lethal injection in Virginia.

There were also Edward Johnson, a poor black from rural Mississippi convicted of murdering the local white sheriff, and Nicky Ingram, a convicted murderer born in England.

Mr Stafford Smith represented Ingram for ten years before his execution in Georgia's electric chair in 1993. He has since admitted that Ingram had become a close friend. The scorched and smoking flesh inside the chamber proved too reminiscent of Joan of Arc for Mr Stafford Smith.

He says: "The volunteers taunted Nicky by explaining in detail how the electrocution kills. There's something truly wrong about a country in which people volunteer for such a sadistic duty. It reminded me how much I hate America at times."

He is now concentrating his efforts on commuting the sentence of Krishna Maharaj, a British citizen convicted in Florida of killing two men. He still owes a moral debt to

about 30 clients, but says he will leave the US in time to run for a second-term Blair government. He is talking about establishing a civil rights law office in London, a British sister to the crisis assistance centre, which would operate in tandem with any political aspirations.

Meanwhile, he will continue to live in New Orleans with Emily. There is talk – after a failed first marriage and several disastrous relationships – of a future wedding. And the house in the Lower Garden District may be finished in time for the move, a symbolic ending to his mission in the United States.

Warning: mountains go down as well as up

Joe Joseph spots a brochure that tells the awful truth

This is the time of year when many of us throw our swimming trunks and flip-flops into a suitcase, jump on a plane and take off to a remote Mediterranean hideaway – often without giving a second thought to what our wives and children will think of our mysterious fortnight's disappearance.

But the holiday can turn sour if the resort fails to live up to the expectations raised by a tour company's brochure. So one travel firm is now promising to fly holidaymakers home and give them a full refund if, on reaching their hotel or resort, they feel it does not live up to the idyllic snapshots and descriptions in the brochure.

Other firms are bound to follow, but there could be a catch. There are only so many white-sand beaches and picturesque market squares in the world, which leaves brochure-compilers with two options if they want to avoid shelling out hundreds of refunds: they can restrict their holiday packages to those few paradisaical spots that never fail to thrill, or they can offer the same range of destinations, but accompanied by photos and descriptions so honest that there will be no grounds for redress.

Copywriters have opted for the second approach in compiling forthcoming winter brochures. That is why the Swisserama Ski Company offers the following information for clients considering its winter packages:

● Few holidays match skiing in the opportunities it provides for combining invigorating alpine scenery with a physical challenge. ● Do not leave your children alone with apples on their heads. ● Not all Swiss speak French. Many speak a strange-sounding language called Swiss-German, so do not be perturbed if the locals sound as if they are swallowing small pieces of ironmongery when talking. ● Crime rates are low but

try not to look like a tourist, especially when handling money. Tourists often stand out in banks as they are the ones without handcuffs linking them to briefcases. ● On the bright side, bank queues are usually short, because there are plenty of banks. Switzerland may be the only country that has more banks than restaurants, probably because the national dish comprises cubes of stale bread dunked in molten cheese (see also *under Cuisine*). ● Cuisine: another favourite dish is rösti, which, to the untrained eye, seems to be



made of fried potato peelings, whereas the trained eye can see it really is made of fried potato peelings.

● While we hope you will never have to visit an infirmary during your stay, we must point out that it is once common for novice skiers to suffer accidents towards the end of the holiday, just as they were feeling confident enough to attempt more adventurous runs. Thanks to huge advances in graphite-ski technology, skiers now often break their legs on the very first day.

● The Eiger has been there for millions of years. If no one bothered to climb its North Face until 50 years ago, there must have been a good reason.

● The Swisserama Ski Company takes no responsibility for strange behaviour by anyone who resembles any person in the brochure photographs or literature. Remember that in Zurich,

government officials spend £8 million a year washing the grit before it is sprinkled on the snowy streets; people who are willing to pay taxes to launder road grit are bound to do other odd things as well.

● The Swiss want you to find out as little about their country as possible, especially if your grandparents once held a Swiss bank account opened to protect their savings from Nazi hands. Thus, it can be hard to find guidebooks locally, so buy one before you go. No, there is no *Rough Guide to Switzerland*.

● The logo for Crédit Suisse is a red cross. But beware: there are so many red crosses of one sort or another all over Switzerland that you can stand in a queue for 20 minutes waiting to cash traveller's cheques and the first hint that you are not in a branch of Crédit Suisse but in an infirmary is when they produce a syringe and start rubbing antiseptic on your upper arm.

● Don't assume that you are bound to have a serious skiing accident. Statistical analysis by Switzerland's leading computer-aided actuaries shows it could just as easily be your wife who breaks her neck.

● Someone skiing very fast may not necessarily be an expert skier. He or she may just be incontinent.

● If you see large patches of green on the pistes, we will transfer you to a resort at a higher altitude, where snow conditions are better. If you see large patches of sand, you took the wrong plane and are in Swaziland.

● If you are stranded on the slopes and walk into a remote farmhouse to seek help, do not be surprised to see a dried bear's penis hanging from the ceiling.

The Swiss regard it as a lucky charm against lightning. Not so lucky for the bear, of course, and not, so far, imitated by Smallbone in its "chalet kitchen" range.

● Mountains are steep and go down as well as up.

● The Swisserama Ski Company notes: "You have been warned!"

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One man's profile is another man's plug

I want to write about plugs. Plugs, plugging, the plugged and the differences between plugs. To date, I have not mentioned *Start the Week* nor *The South Bank Show* once in this column. This self-denying ordinance has now been waived by the executive to whom I refer on such delicate matters.

Why bother to court inevitable ripostes by responding to that current vice of fashion which uses the word "plug" to describe dozens of radio and television programmes? Because it is time to make a stand.

Why is a favourable review in a newspaper called a favourable review, while the same thing on radio or television is increasingly called a plug? Why in a newspaper is an amiable profile of a currently exhibiting, publishing, producing or performing artist called a profile while on radio and television it is called a plug?

A review or profile are things of a certain weight which can even aspire to distinction. A plug is a

common little *arriviste*. Perhaps, sadly, this is still at the heart of it. Our seemingly intransigent hierarchical system may have fled certain traditional territories, but it is alive and squeaking in the culture. There is little doubt that print is thought top dog. Frankly I think so myself sometimes. But this does not mean that all other dogs are damned. And, in the matter of profiling, interviewing and even reviewing artists today, I think that radio and television make contributions often far beyond that of print.

Yet there is something about snobbery that will not be eradicated. I expect it is too useful and even enjoyable a tool to let go of. Of course, for some poor folk it is the only way they can find themselves. There are those who seriously consider it a claim to superior intelligence that they "don't watch

television". One absurdity of that is the word "television", as if it were an undifferentiated monolithic block. Could anyone talk about "print" in a similar fashion and not be thought a fool?

Radio has gained respectability, partly because of the arrival of television. But there is still the basic suspicion that what is new is coarse and what is widely accessible is shallow.

Take a television arts profile — now routinely referred to as "a plug for..." It is true that TV producers tend to profile artists when a new work has been produced — exactly as newspapers and magazines do. There are commonsense and practical reasons for this. It is often true that, rather more than newspaper and magazine editors do, TV producers tend to devote time to artists they admire. The reason for this is



simple. Television is expensive and slots are few and producers would rather spend time with William Golding, whose work matters to them, than with a hundred others whose work they could happily

mince. But does this admitted bias in selectivity constitute a plug? Certainly it can be a celebration. But I maintain that it can be very much more, and very often is.

Take Golding as an example. In the two profiles we did with him on *The South Bank Show*, he collaborated not only in memorable interviews, but in readings and in engaging programme-makers in their critique of his work. His work was also illustrated, again in collaboration with him, and I have no doubt that in the future those Golding films will be pulled from the shelf as long as there is an interest in the man — which is not perhaps a claim that can be made with as much certainty about newspaper and magazine profiles.

Incidentally, in the Golding films critics of substance gave their view of his work. We often include critics in the profiles we make and this is never mentioned by those who criticise the programmes themselves. Just as the wholly non-profile programmes — for example four recent new films by under-25-year-olds — receive the barest press of anything we do.

Just as *The South Bank Show* is one of several TV programmes accused of plugging, so *Start the Week* is one of several radio programmes accused of the same. In the case of *Start the Week* the charge is even more puzzling, especially as it exists with the perception that I rip into the guests on that programme rather too often.

Once again, like their colleagues and rivals in print, the *Start the Week* team tends to choose an author or a commentator whose book or an article has just come out. This gives us all the spin of

contemporaneity. It is clearly the case on *Start the Week* that the authors are regularly challenged not only by myself or the second interviewer, but not infrequently by the guests as well.

Of course there are exceptions, and on some occasions one is simply keen to absorb as much as possible from a new book full of insights. And sometimes time is better deployed in exposition than in opposition. But there is no way a regular and fair listener to *Start the Week* could call out "plug". Sometimes I am extremely enthusiastic about the works we discuss — just like any print journalist. Yes, the titles of books are mentioned, just as they are in print. Apart from anything else, it saves money for those listeners who want to know what has been discussed and are irritated when forced to ring up or write in to ask what has been discussed.

Does it matter? Not in the long run, the work will defend itself. The plug is reductive. The plug is a substitute for discrimination.

POP: V97 hits Chelmsford and Leeds; Matthew Sweet visits London; and the man behind the Waterboys is back

A rocking good tale of two cities

I f Chelmsford and Reading are the mother and father of British rock festivals, the "V" event has swiftly become the child prodigy. Mounted by the Virgin group, this two-day, two-venue summer gala won a European Festival of the Year award at the first time of asking a year ago.

To wedge a foot so firmly in the stage door is no mean achievement, since observers have lately been queuing to condemn the perceived overcrowding of our live outdoor schedule. This summer's loser was Phoenix, which reportedly came a commercial cropper last month.

Whereas that event has struggled to put a unique thumbprint on the festival season, V97 successfully built a unique "caravan" giving fans 150 miles apart the chance to share a 50-act bill of post-Britpop and dance fare. Thus on a roasting Saturday, campers and day pupils at Hylands Park in Chelmsford, Essex, and Temple Newsam, Leeds, marinated themselves in beer and barbecued themselves in bonhomie. And yesterday, in a mirror image, the southern bill went north and vice versa.

Via the services of a Virgin helicopter, your reporter and photographer sampled two days in one on Saturday, flying between locations and finding a spirit of eerie concu-

V97
Chelmsford/Leeds

rence in parallel musical universes. As we left Chelmsford, the Supernaturals were dispensing their good-humoured, summery pop on the main stage. Lifting away and heading north, the sell-out crowd — 50,000 over the weekend — soon looked like worker ants on their day off, the multicoloured tents adding humanity to an inevitable sea of Virgin logos.

Eighty minutes later we were looking down on a repeat image in Leeds, which was due to host a further, near-capacity 40,000. As I wandered from main to second stage, I was a specially-constructed stock car-Stonehenge that presided over a strong set from Geneva, set apart by their delicate songcraft and the celestial vocals of Andrew Montgomery.

In the main arena Placebo were at large. You would know that lanky guitar and the almost caricature whine of Brian Molko anywhere, and a double-feature of their hits *Bruise Pristine* and *Teenage Angst* was warmly welcomed.

We landed back in Chelmsford to reports of a positively beatific day of hot music and "chilled" punters. Chilled in

spirit, certainly, but close to combustion in the dance tent, where the Chemical Brothers were weaving their sonic sorcery in an atmosphere of at least 110 degrees, a kind of hip-hop Hades.

On the NME Stage, Maass rounded out a performance of trademark swagger with *She Makes My Nose Bleed* and *Take It Easy Chick*, then Ash worked themselves back into contention after their recording interlude, delivering some robust new material and sending many back to their tents swaying happily to *Girl From Mars* and *Oh Yeah*.

The real homecoming was Blur's. After a busy few months on international duty, they staged a two-hour homecoming celebration. Damon Albarn clearly happy and confident in his own Essex backyard. Further emboldened by the addition of a horn section, their set managed to reflect their current tenure in garageland and to be a greatest hits celebration, on production pieces like *To The End* and *The Universal and*, naturally, their county anthem, *Girls and Boys*.

We only crashed back down to earth during a two-hour wait to get out of the car park. Helicopter, where were your speedy blades now?

PAUL SEXTON



Blur's Damon Albarn at the V97 Festival in Chelmsford: "clearly happy and confident in his own Essex backyard"

A ray of West Coast sunlight

Matthew Sweet's prospects of a commercial breakthrough seem to have been on a back burner for so long that his career might well have boiled dry. Paul Sexton writes. But, on a rare London visit to mark another well-kept secret of a new album, *Blue Sky on Mars*, the American was brimful of distinctively toothsome musical nourishment.

Sweet grew up in Georgia and trod the same boards as the beguiling R.E.M. Now, though, he resides in Los Angeles, which seems the appropriate abode for his untanned, melody-laden alternative pop. Like Teenage Fanclub in this country, his lot in life seems to be tolerating kneejerk comparisons with the Beatles, mixed, in his case,

Matthew Sweet
LA2, WC2

with references to Alex Chilton's Big Star. Still, if the bigger stage still seems somewhere in the middle distance for Sweet after 11 years of recording, Teenage Fanclub's belated achievement of a Top Three album in this country should give him hope. *Blue Sky on Mars* sees Sweet continue to edge further away from the bubblegum-chevy pop of *Girlfriend*, the 1991 album that is his best-known to date. In the LA2 on a night as hot as the inside of a sleeping bag in the Sahara, Sweet's raw-boned and raunchy side was showing all the more. In T-shirt and

workshirt, sawing away at his guitar, he looked just like Neil Young's younger and happier brother.

Come to California was the opening invitation, as it is on the current album. Sweet continues to represent an inviting chink of modern-day, West Coast sunlight for those who, like him, keep their Brian Wilson Fan Club badges well polished, and the post-grunge *Per Sounds* offer was in evidence on several other new songs. But he is his own man, capable of turning a melody, such as that of *Back to You*, so

that you are quietly amazed someone, such as Wilson, did not get there first. 30 years ago.

Glances over his shoulder included several nods towards 1993's *Altered Beast* album and, after an hour, a slightly static feeling was growing. It was mainly because of the realisation that this is music for the great outdoors, not the sticky indoors.

One of his clear objectives was achieved, anyway, almost every Sweet in the bag was something you could take home humming.

Megaphone man

MIKE SCOTT, the passion and driving force behind the Waterboys, is back. Having been blamed for the birth of Raggle Taggle, a Celtic-Gypsy movement, then denounced as a mad heretic for embracing spirituality during his retreat to the Findhorn Community in Scotland, Scott returned, rock guitar firmly in hand, with a four-day residency at this small North London venue.

A two-decade career, which included an Ivor Novello award for *The Whale of the Moon*, coupled with private self-discovery, is an inspiring combination. Gone is the quiet introspection of *Bring Me All In*, his last solo album. In its place Scott coerced a swelling crowd to dance into dehydration with grand metaphors embodied in distorted guitar from the new album *Still Burning*.

Before the show the softly spoken frontman enthused at the prospect of playing with a rock band for the first time in seven years. "It's fantastic. Here I am, back in the big city with the sound of traffic 24 hours a day... I just had to

make my music louder so I could hear myself."

The new show is an unremitting workout for the man once described as making the definitive music for mountain-tops. With one of his famed growing breaths, Scott glided gracefully into the new single *Love Anyway* before punching the lights out of old favourites like *Medicine Bow*. He held the stage with charm, and the whole feel of the set was like watching someone slip into a warm bath. Scott was poised and relaxed, with the added bonus of Ian McNabb, the former *Leeds Works* magician, on bass and backing vocals. Having promised to travel in the direction of *Building The City Of Light*, Scott actually delivered the track as an encore, leaving a bedraggled audience not sure if they wanted to perspire, expire or ask for more. Welcome back.

PAULA SHUTKEVER

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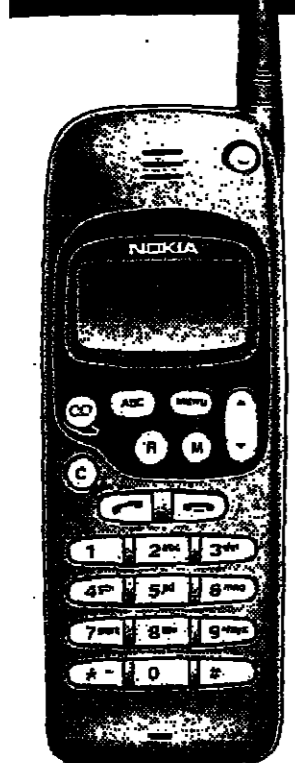
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Why the RA should hang Myra

Isabel Carlisle on a portrait with the power to shock

For the first time in its history the Royal Academy has been manoeuvred into passing judgment on a work of art and possibly even censoring it before it is shown.

The controversy is over a portrait of Myra Hindley in the exhibition *Sensation*, a selection of works from the Charles Saatchi collection, which opens on September 18. It is a provocative title that flaunts the fact that much of the art is deliberately shocking. Young British art (as collected by Saatchi), like young British culture, is unrepentantly in-your-face, fascinated with materials and visual double meanings.

In creating *Myra*, Marcus Harvey used the cast of a child's hand to print paint onto an 18ft by 9ft canvas. The painting replicates the police photograph taken in 1966, as if blown up so that its pixels are made visible, and alludes to the children murdered by Hindley and Ian Brady.

Resolute in the anticipation of protests from animal rights activists about the use of dead animals in Damien Hirst's work, and from campaigners against child pornography incensed at the perversely child mannequins of the Chapman brothers, the RA is wobbling after publicity generated in the press by the children's charity Kidscape.

Hindley herself, and the mothers of the murdered children Keith Bennett and Lesley Ann Downey. An extraordinary meeting of the RA's Council has been called this week to vote on whether to withdraw the painting on the ground that it would cause unnecessary suffering for the victims' relatives.

It would be a disaster for the Academy's credibility if it was forced down the slippery slope of art censorship, but that is not the only issue. Art is one way in which society deals with political and moral questions. Removing one work does not resolve the problem that the artist has focused on, or lessen the possible anguish of those directly involved.

When the council votes, members should be clear that this exhibition, and *Myra* in particular, have become lightning conductors for storms that have been rumbling for some time. The Academy has been caught between the Scylla of young British art and the Charybdis of publicity-seeking individuals.

The first article dealing with the *Myra* painting appeared in the *Evening Standard* on July 25. It led with the news that: "An anti-child abuse charity has urged the public to boycott the RA over plans to exhibit a portrait of Moors child killer Myra Hindley." The director of Kidscape, Michele Elliot, was reported as saying: "How sad that an artist has to resort to sick exploitation of dead children to get noticed. I wouldn't go near this exhibition and I would advise everyone else to boycott it."

This was good publicity for Kidscape but the possibility that the painting was keeping the memory of the five murdered children alive in the public imagination in a way that would arouse compassion was not considered. Nor, in the media debate that ensued, had anybody except the artist's

dealer, Jay Jopling, seen the painting. Speaking to *The Mirror* the following day, Ann West, mother of the murdered Lesley Ann Downey, said: "They are making a film star out of a murderer." And in the *Daily Mail* Winnie Johnson, mother of Keith Bennett, was reported to have asked the RA to withdraw *Myra*. She expressed her anguish at having old wounds reopened and threatened to sue if the portrait went on show. Astonishingly, Hindley backed them up.

Hindley has been working with her lawyers on an appeal for early release since May, when a High Court ruling challenged the decision of the former Home Secretary Michael Howard that her life sentence should indeed be for life. In a letter to *The Guardian* on July 31 she urged the RA to withdraw her portrait on the grounds of "the emotional pain and trauma that would inevitably be experienced by the families of the Moors victims". Or is it that the wave of revulsion that inevitably accompanies any parading of her case in the public eye might jeopardise her appeal? Her alignment with the victims' families is suspect if not hypocritical.

Winnie Johnson said as much to the *Oldham Evening Chronicle* and retaliated by threatening to launch a private prosecution for her son's murder.

It is significant that every story on *Myra* in the national press was illustrated by a photo of the Harvey portrait (regardless of whether that would cause distress to the victims' families or not). The photo that *Myra* is based on is the one that news editors turn to every time Hindley's case resurfaces. As Marcus Harvey has said: "The image has a kind of hideous attraction." In that demonising photo Hindley does indeed achieve parity with film stars, and in its translation into paint Harvey is doing for Hindley what Andy Warhol did for Marilyn Monroe. But two points to remember are that the photographs had already reached iconic status when the artist turned to them, and the artists never told us how to look at the paintings.

It is always dangerous to judge a work of art on the basis of a newspaper photograph. If the debate around *Myra* is to have any validity it should be put on public display, because if there are any moral judgments to be passed, it is up to us to do so. We don't need the RA to act as nanny. Motivated by the search for a new means of expression, and keenly aware of the marketing value of being controversial, young British artists will continue to push back the boundaries of what is acceptable. There will be more art that is equally hard to stomach but, unlike the Nazis, who banned their avant-garde art for being degenerate, we should be robust enough to deal with it.

Banning *Myra* would set a dangerous precedent. The right action for the Academy now is to repeat to the victims' families its shared abhorrence at the appalling crime that Hindley committed and its profound sympathy, but to go ahead and hang *Myra*.

Every story in the press has shown a photo of the portrait

A hitherto undiscovered dialogue of Plato, *Soki and Taki*, found recently in the Vatican library

Nothing Taki, it's just Platonic

William Rees-Mogg

I have observed that they are not. Socrates: Are men successful in proportion to their virtues?

Taki: In this world, Socrates, I have observed that they are not. Socrates: So virtue gives no assurance either of happiness or of success. Taki: We are both Greeks, Socrates. You were the Greek of the highest virtue in your times, and the people of Athens condemned you to death. They are no wiser today.

Socrates: So virtue does not lead to happiness or success. Yet you celebrate the virtues of your friend. Why is that?

Taki: For him, his virtues helped him to succeed. The modern world is in this way much like the old world — to the strong belong the spoils. But I loved him for his virtues and would have done so even if his courage had led to his ruin, as it might have done. Socrates: Virtue is therefore good in itself. Courage is good in itself, loyalty is good in itself, honesty is good in itself. Is that not so?

Taki: I cannot disagree with what you say. Socrates: Yet you choose to lead a life among people who lack these virtues. When you write of the city you call "the Big Apple", it seems to have many people who are indeed rich, but who lack the heroic virtues you admire, and the Christian virtues of humility and compassion as well. There were many such people

in Athens when I was living there. Taki: As I said, Socrates, Athens has not changed in that respect. Socrates: We were speaking yesterday of another of your rich friends, Dodi. He does not, I think, possess the virtues of the old heroes of the *Iliad*.

Taki: Nor indeed does he possess the wisdom of the hero of the *Odyssey*. Socrates: Yet by the standards which you seem to accept he leads a most successful life. He comes of a

family of great wealth; his father owns a shop where beautiful women of all ages buy expensive merchandise. He has himself slept with many beautiful young women; he has given them lustrous jewels from his father's shop, and taken them in his family yacht, which would in my time have been the envy of the port of Athens, and would have required 60 slaves to row.

Taki: He has done all these things. Socrates: He has then all those benefits which people of your society aspire to — riches, beautiful women,

chariots of luxury on land, sea and air. Is it not so? Taki: These are indeed the objects which many of my friends covet. Socrates: Would you not therefore say that Dodi is successful, that his life is a model for younger men to emulate? He must, I suppose, be a very happy man, since he has everything which others of his contemporaries are striving to win for themselves.

Taki: Few people would call him successful, if only because it is his father who has made the fortune. Even I feel more successful by writing, which is my own achievement, than from my fortune, which was my father's, grateful as I am to my father for it. Socrates: You too have slept with many beautiful women, perhaps with more than Dodi as you are older than he is. Do you think this has made him happy?

Taki: I think it probably made him happy when he was doing it, but post coitum omne animal triste, there is a sadness which follows making love. Socrates: Is not the sadness deeper than that? Is he not an example, are you not an example, was not your lost friend himself an example of seeking happiness where it cannot be found? Is it not the truth that men do not find happiness in wealth, or luxury, or beautiful women, or fine houses, or shining chariots, or yachts, if they do not develop happiness in themselves?

You yourself have drunk much; you often write of it; do men find happiness in gold any more than you could find it in a bottle?

Taki: The life of pleasure, lived with courage and loyalty to friends, is not a dishonourable life, oh Socrates. Socrates: I was not speaking of dishonour, Taki, but of illusion. Do not the goods that he bought in a shop, even in Dodi's father's shop, bring little comfort to those whose lives are unhappy? Can a young woman who has lost her lover be made happy by a jewelled ring? Will she not continue to bewail her lot?

Taki: Some young women would rather have a jewel than any lover, but it is true, Socrates, that there is much suffering in a life of pleasure, diligently pursued. That is why the life of pleasure is only a proper undertaking for men of courage. It is no career for weaklings.

Socrates: Does a wise person, man or woman, seek happiness where it cannot be found? Taki: No Socrates, a wise person does not. But where is a wise person to be found and where is happiness to be found?

Socrates: We shall talk about that, Taki, tomorrow. If we have established where happiness is not to be found, we may yet hope to tell where it may be discovered. It seems, from what we have said, that there is little happiness in the fashionable life of wealth and pleasure, and perhaps much pain.

Happiness is not to be found in a bank account, or in a succession of love affairs, or even in the best wines, nor can it be bought in a shop. For those who seek it in these places, we should feel pity rather than anger. Perhaps, as the sages have said, happiness comes only from the gods or from service to others. But we shall speak more of that anon.

Now that the party's over...

Labour appears to be gearing up for its first purge, says Michael Gove

Britain's A-level students aren't the only bright young things whose future has been decided this summer. New Labour ministers may deserve a break after their energetic start but the shadow of the axe and the promise of preferment have made these holidays anything but relaxing for some. While Mr Blair enjoys the Mediterranean sun, others sweat for different reasons. Already reshuffle rumours have replaced the Thai baht as the speculators' favourite currency.

It may seem bizarre that a reshuffle should be contemplated so soon, when the celebrations for the first 100 days are only just leading to hangover, but this is an impatient administration. In the past few weeks the names of those travelling headlong to the knacker's yard have been whispered in Westminster's not-quite deserted corridors.

The three Cabinet ministers whose jackets appear to be on the shoestyles of nails are the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Clark, the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, and the Minister for Transport, Gavin Strang. They are, however, linked by more than an emerging consensus that they lack grip. All three have fallen foul of Whitehall's unlikeliest axis, the alliance which now exists between the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, and the Prime Minister's deputy, Peter Mandelson.

The Prescott-Mandelson pact may seem as unlikely a coupling between gloss and beefcake as Diana and Dodi, but it was carefully nurtured in Opposition and has flourished in power. Sensing that Mr Prescott's Jimmy Nail earliness was the perfect counterpoint to the cosmopolitan sheen of the Labour leadership, he encouraged the adoption of a higher profile for the deputy leader. Mr Mandelson's marketing insight was reinforced by a deeper bond with



Mr Prescott: both resent the power wielded by the man who is genuinely Gore to Blair's Clinton — Gordon Brown.

In office, Messrs Mandelson and Prescott have developed a fruitful partnership, most notably in their shared enthusiasm for the Millennium Dome, a project Mr Brown was determined to kill. Now, like Octavian and Anthony in *Julius Caesar*, they are believed to be pricking the names of those to be purged.

Top of the list is Gavin Strang, awkward at the dispatch box and overwhelmed in the department, he has enraged Prescott with his maladroit handling of the roads programme. David Clark and Chris Smith are in Mandelson's line of fire. While Mr Clark is the Cabinet Minister in the Cabinet Office and thus Mr Mandelson's nominal master, he is a Hansburg puppet to his subordinate's Metternich. Mr Clark's mishandling of the proposed Freedom of Information legislation has provided the excuse for his

ejection, and — if that is the post he covets — for Mr Mandelson's elevation. The other Cabinet post which might, however, attract the Minister in want of a bigger Portfolio is Culture. In assuming responsibility for the Millennium Experience, Mr Mandelson has already taken over the Culture Department's most prominent responsibility. So why not take over the department?

Mr Mandelson isn't the only Minister of State who should shortly be sitting at the Cabinet table. The Schools Minister, Stephen Byers, though resented by some colleagues for his capacity to grab headlines, is a sure bet. Articulate, focused, unostentatious and intelligent, he should be joined by the slightly lower-profile but equally able Alan Milburn, the Health Minister. Both are also, in a Government determined to show a youthful face, reassuringly under 50.

Alan Milburn's departmental colleague Tessa Jowell is also tipped to join them, but she may be pipped by the Economic Secretary to the Treas-

ury, Helen Liddell. Even if Mrs Liddell doesn't change, the Treasury team will. The Financial Secretary, Dawn Primarolo, can expect her diary to look clearer this autumn.

Although the speculation is maturing, no one expects any reshuffle to take place much before November. Even erring ministers will be allowed to enjoy the sauna of adulation at this October's party conference. The conference will, however, be a test for the man who is expected to profit most from any subsequent shuffle — the ubiquitous Mr Mandelson.

Conscious of the extent to which he owes his position to Mr Blair's patronage, Mr Mandelson is attempting to secure democratic legitimacy before he makes it to the Cabinet. He is hoping to secure election to Labour's National Executive Committee at the Brighton conference. Although he is caricatured as a courtier rather than as a modern politician,

Mr Mandelson has surprised colleagues, and the media, before by putting himself out on an electoral limb when he was secure at the centre of power. He abandoned his position by Neil Kinnock's side, as Labour's head of campaigns and communications, in the run-up to the 1992 general election to find a seat. At the time, his decision to leave the security of the leader's cadre for life as another backbencher surprised some but, notwithstanding his internal exile under John Smith, Mr Mandelson's manoeuvre paid off.

Now, it is assumed, he is taking a far greater risk. Demanded by the media, disliked by parliamentary colleagues and dubbed a "vote-loser" by Tory focus groups — they should know — he seems destined to fail in his search for a seat on the NEC when he could continue to enjoy a favoured place next to the throne. Why risk failure when all else is set fair?

Mr Mandelson, however, will not fail. New Labour does not pick battles it cannot win. He has working for him the most effective electoral machine within the party. In the past, internal Labour Party elections were won by vote-gathering caucuses of the Left, whether Hard like the Bennite Rank and File Mobilising Committee, or Soft like the Labour Co-ordinating Committee. Now, they are like the caucuses to which they rallied, in Marx's dustbin of history.

The Campaign Group still scores some successes in the party's elections, as the survival of Diane Abbott attests, but the only machine still worthy of the name is on the party's modernising Right. The votes in the battle to reform Clause Four were delivered by an anonymous group of young activists, operating with Mr Blair's blessing from rooms in South London, and their work has been carried on by the "political education trust", Progress.

It is run by Mr Mandelson's former aide, Derek Draper, now completing an authoritative account of Mr Blair's first 100 days. Progress and those around it run a network of leadership-loyal activists and weekend training schools addressed by former union fixers such as the Armed Forces Minister John Speller, who are past masters at making sure democracy delivers. In new Labour it won't only be Cabinet reshuffles which allow the leader to put his people into power.

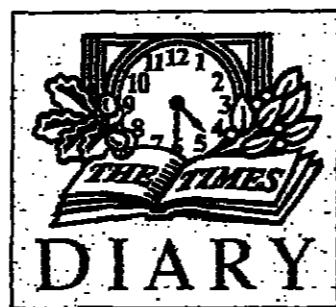
Going solo

JUST when Scotland and Wales thought they had the devolution debate all to themselves, the tiny self-styled principality of Monmouthshire has come muscling onto the scene. In a campaign led

by Chepstow antiquarian bookseller Greg Lance-Watkins, supporters of an Independent Queendom of Monmouth are urging the reinstatement of Monmouthshire's ancient status as a buffer state between England and Wales.

"We want a Queendom because we have no King at present," explains Lance-Watkins without a hint of sarcasm. "If devolution is good enough for Wales and Scotland, then it's time Monmouthshire also stood up and reclaimed its rightful place in the United Kingdom." The substance of Lance-Watkins's argument rests on an ancient and, he says, as yet unchallenged law which establishes Monmouthshire (population 85,000) as a free and separate state within the UK.

"That law has never been overturned," says Lance-Watkins. "We're still technically at war with the Germans, because while the declaration of war was made on behalf of England, Scotland, Wales and Monmouthshire, the peace



treaty failed to include us. We give our allegiance to the Queen rather than owe it."

Inspired by the new spirit of devolution, Lance-Watkins has even drafted a manifesto in which he outlines proposals for what he calls "England's very own Monaco". He calls for Nato member status, inclusion of Monmouthshire in the EU and even a separate currency.

Last orders

A CURIOUS row has erupted between Viscount Brookeborough, descendant of the Serjeant family, who once owned a large estate in

Sussex, and the brewers Bass Taverners. The alteration comes after news that the brewers are planning to change the name of a Haywards Heath pub which bears Brookeborough's family name, the Serjeant Arms, and rename it The Dolphin. "Brewers are too prone to changing pub names for no good reason," says the peer.

Bass maintains that in the 1880s the pub was called The Dolphin. "We are turning the clock back, not forward," said a spokesman.

Shirley Eaton, the Bond girl who wowed us with her gold-painted body in the film *Goldfinger*, is on the lookout for a publisher. Having returned from the South of France two years ago after the death of her husband, Eaton has penned a collection of poems: "They're about the sea, my love for my husband, my children," said the former actress. "Some of them are rather spiritual."

Duty calls

THAMES VALLEY Police are seeking help and counselling after receiving a letter from a Reading



Golden girl Shirley Eaton

legal firm explaining proposed changes in arrangements for duty solicitors on call. The letter stated quite clearly: "We would inform you that Miss D has exchanged her duty which is on July 1 (already swapped with Mr G) with Mr M, who will be taking that date, while Miss D will be doing the court duty on July 14 for Mr M (who had already swapped with Mr N). We trust this will not cause any confusion." A police spokesman said: "Of course we are not confused. We are totally gobsmacked. Do you know

the number of the Plain English Campaign?"

Sparks fly

AMATEUR dramatics societies' favourite playwright, Sir Alan Ayckbourn, has become embroiled in a village drama of his own. Set in Great Ayrton, North Yorkshire, the plot involves 800 villagers, the council and Sir Alan being opposed by a local electrician.

Ayckbourn, hoping for a repeat of his 1996 triumph when he transformed an Odeon cinema into a £5.2million theatre in Scarborough after a battle with the council over funding, had lent his support to a campaign to stop the conversion of the village's Rosehill Theatre into houses. Ayckbourn had written to Hambleton council, urging it to vote for its preservation saying it was "a valuable and proven asset to the village's social life". But his mission was thwarted by electrical contractor Chris Scott, who dismissed the village's theatrical dreams as "pure lampy". Scott, the district council's deputy, said: "Sir Alan either, and he's been playing a role in the drama."



Thwarted: Alan Ayckbourn

As the smoke clears from the battlefields of Loe Bar, Cornwall, after last week's scuffles between members of a German religious cult who treaded the beach to worship there, and the National Trust, local residents were left wondering just why the eviction took so long. One Trust official admitted that the problem was one of judicial interest: "We had a job getting a judge who was not a member of the National Trust."

P.H.S

LIGHT IN DARK PLACES

The high cost of corruption is finally being acknowledged

Three remarkable calls to action by India's leaders and one cautiously worded but equally revolutionary document issued this month by the International Monetary Fund could be August swallows announcing a fairer future for millions. Their common theme is corruption, an evil which, like extreme poverty, has been with us since the dawn of organised society. Like poverty, corruption has been too easily accepted — particularly by those who do not themselves have to endure it — as unavoidable in any but the best-run and well-established democracies. That could now be changing, and changing, most hearteningly, not just in the West but in lands in which it is endemic.

In Delhi, India's Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, has marked the 50th anniversary of independence with an impassioned call, endorsed by India's President, for nothing less than a mass campaign of civil disobedience in the style of Mahatma Gandhi, to confront the corruption "eating into the country's vitals like termites". He has appealed to business to report corrupt politicians and officials to a new unit in the Prime Minister's office. But his target is not only such notorious corruption cases as the £175 million indictment against a former leader of his own Janata Dal Party or the scandal surrounding the former Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, but the quotidian petty bribery which Indians have come to treat as normal. Givers, he says, share the blame with takers; every Indian should "resolve today that we will not give a single penny as a bribe to get our work done at any level".

Behind this appeal, which if heeded would change India as much as it would enrich it, lies a sharpening recognition that corruption and poverty go together. It is a form of semi-organised crime, which in countries such as Mexico has been estimated to cost society the equivalent of an extra 20 per cent on marginal tax rates. The poorest pay most — in less education, poorer health and diminished economic opportunity. And the poor have coined a whole language to describe it.

In Mobutu's Zaire, official looting was known as "affirmative shopping": across the world in Indonesia, low-grade (and low-paid) officials calmly refer to bribery as

"informal redistribution". In Kenya, where politicians are dubbed *wabenzi* after their Mercedes-Benzes, "he was a minister" is thought sufficient explanation for someone's conspicuous wealth. And it is Kenya, where the IMF has suspended lending in protest at the collapse of a notorious fraud case, that is an early test of the IMF's new guidelines instructing its staff not only to push market reforms that limit the scope for corruption, but to raise "individual instances of corruption" with recalcitrant governments.

The IMF's tougher stance is backed by its Executive Board; the question is whether Western governments will throw their full weight behind it. In recent history, whether out of cynicism, misplaced post-colonial guilt or Cold War calculation, they have given a scandalously free run, not to mention the free lunch of under-monitored aid, to politicians in poor countries who were known to regard the national treasury as their personal property. In so doing, the West has connived at the impoverishment of these countries' citizens. Only in this decade has the taboo begun to ease.

The response has often been an indignant lecture about arrogant Western prying into matters that were none of its business. The West is in fact ill-placed to preach, and not only because it has corruption scandals of its own. Leaving aside the misuse of aid for Malaysia's Pagan dam and other Western-built white elephants, most Western governments have been culpably lax about curbing the widespread practice of bribery by powerful international corporations. In some Western countries they can even write off these "business expenses" against tax.

What has hardened the IMF's resolve to enter the grey area between economics and politics is the impossibility of turning economies round in a corrupt environment. In countries that rely more on foreign investment than on aid, the IMF's move dovetails with the dawning recognition by politicians that if governments do not act, markets will. Concern about malpractice and slack regulation in South-East Asia's financial sectors helped to trigger the continuing run on its currencies. The cost of corruption is mounting. As the rich get that message, the poor may get a better deal.

SEPARATE HOUSES

British sport is not best served by a single national academy

Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, will soon take a decision involving £100 million of public money. The question he faces is whether to spend lottery cash on a national academy for sport, and if so, where to site the academy; and which sports it should cover. Most people agree on the need for measures to reverse the decline in Britain's sporting prowess; more contentious are the measures themselves.

The genesis of the academy lay with the last Conservative Government. Impressed by Australia's Institute of Sport, set up in the 1970s to address the country's poor performance in the international arena, the then Sports Minister, Iain Sproule, suggested a similar institution here. The idea was strongly backed by John Major.

Specialist sports bodies, however, were less enthusiastic about so much money being spent on just one centre, in which rowers were supposed to mingle with rhythmic gymnasts, shot putters with spin bowlers. In their submissions to the National Heritage Department a year ago, national governing bodies were tepid verging on cool about the proposal. Almost all preferred to concentrate on centres of excellence specific to their sport.

Moreover, closer examination of Australia's record reveals that its national institute has been less than successful in its stated aim. In tennis, for instance, a sport which Australians used to dominate, there has been only one grand slam event singles

winner, male or female, from that country since 1980.

The commercial, non-Olympic sports such as cricket and rugby can raise their own money to boost their game. And football has so highly developed a network of club apprenticeships that it is closing the National School at Lillieshall. The competitive pressures on Premier League clubs are such that it pays huge dividends for them to spot and train talent young rather than find millions of pounds to buy established stars.

More deserving of public assistance are amateur sports such as athletics, gymnastics, swimming and water sports, where television does not bring in enormous income and where Olympic-style facilities for training are rare. But these sports would do better to be given money for regional centres of excellence, closer to athletes' homes, and even for one national centre specific to each discipline.

It is easy to see why Mr Major latched on to the idea of bringing all sporting talent under one roof, on first thought it sounds attractive. But second thoughts make better policy. If Mr Smith is to build a national headquarters, it should concentrate on cross-disciplinary subjects such as sports science, medicine, fitness techniques and technology. For the rest, he should give British sport what it wants and needs: a network of specialist satellite centres, where swimmers can train with swimmers and sprinters with sprinters.

ALL IN THE MIND

Mental games make the most humane of sporting contests

This week London provides an arena for formidable mental combat. The Mind Sports Olympiad, open to anyone, begins at the Royal Festival Hall. Contestants are arriving from all over the world to pit their cerebral skills against each other. Those unable to attend in person can log on to the Internet site and vie in a virtual game.

Modern interest in sport and physical fitness borders on the obsessive. We worship at the temple of the body. But the exercise of the mind is as essential to our well-being as our morning score of sit-ups. Honing logic, increasing mental agility and expanding memory, it heightens adaptability and staves off premature senility. The ancient world knew this well. It was for *mens sana in corpore sano* that Juvenal prayed.

Many of the games featured in the Olympiad are of antique provenance. It has often been postulated that a precursor to draughts existed in Egypt as long ago as 1600 BC, while the Chinese, it is believed, were playing a version of chess — *xiangqi* — as long ago as 400 BC. These ancient games now take their place in the Olympiad alongside such innovations as Abalone, a test of strategy played with marbles on a hexagonal board, and Magic: The Gathering, a trading-card game invented in 1993. Ancient or modern, imaginative or logical, they share one element: the power to expand and sharpen the mind.

In themselves these games may seem futile. Years of intensive training are sometimes required and the skills attained may not have direct practical use. But Plato believed that such games formed a vital part of a leader's education, while such thinkers as Marcel Duchamp, Hermann Hesse and Ludwig Wittgenstein elevated them to an almost mystical significance.

Nowadays companies are increasingly aware of the importance of their intellectual assets which — though they may not register on the balance sheet — enhance competitiveness. The ancient Chinese game of Go, in which the winner is the one whose counters control most territory on a grid, is said to be analogous to business management. Merchant banks are quick to employ chess masters, while contestants who compete to compile computer programmes against the clock have obvious commercial relevance.

Britain sets an important precedent in staging this first Mind Sports Olympiad. The nation is improving its performance in these contests of the mind. Earlier this year the English team won the European chess championship. Perhaps next year we should move the counters one square further, competing to invent a new game — one which, like the glass bead game which Hesse dreamt off, would employ the widest range of mental faculties, melding the skills of art and science. But for now, let play commence.

The 'quagmire' for a Bill of Rights

From the Provost of The Queen's College, Oxford

Sir, It will be a bad day for rights and liberties if the Government is allowed to get away with introducing a Bill of Rights based on the New Zealand model — the "weakest" of the four options outlined by David Pannick ("How to judge a human rights Bill", Law, August 12).

The New Zealand model is not a genuine Bill of Rights. The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 is no put it no higher) an unprincipled and nonsensical instrument which affirms in effect that all citizens have rights unless the legislature (in practice the government majority) decides that they do not.

The Act forbids the courts to hold any law invalid by reason of its inconsistency with the Bill of Rights. Such a provision violates both constitutional principle and common sense. It is the function of courts to decide what the law is.

If the Bill of Rights is law, its express purpose is to disable a simple majority of legislators from infringing rights. To deny power to the courts to determine when they have done so is to enable the majority to determine the limits of their own jurisdiction, a provision which simultaneously damages the rule of law and the separation of powers.

All of this is elementary, but it seems about to be ignored. In New Zealand the model chosen has produced a legal quagmire, and it would do so here. There may, in many cases, be no judicial opinion on the compatibility of legislation with the Bill of Rights, since if a court considers that the legislation is clear the question of whether it infringes rights does not arise for decision.

All those in all parties who have over the years supported the case for a Bill of Rights will regard a Bill modelled on these principles as a betrayal of their cause and will treat it with deserved derision.

If — as is rumoured — the New Zealand model is what the Lord Chancellor's Cabinet committee has in mind, it would do well to think again.

Yours faithfully,

GEOFFREY MARSHALL,

The Queen's College, Oxford.

August 13.

Role of the CPS

From His Honour Joseph Dean

Sir, Justice is the principle intended to underlie all our criminal procedures. But should it really be the duty of prosecuting counsel "to act as a minister of justice", as His Honour Judge Morrell suggests in his letter of August 12? Is not that the duty of the judge, leaving it to prosecuting counsel to prosecute and defending counsel to defend? This after all is the basis of our adversarial system of trial.

Much court time is wasted nowadays by prosecuting counsel elaborately explaining to the jury the necessity to satisfy the "burden" and also the "standard" of proof. That is the first duty of the judge in summing up, and defending counsel will rightly have placed full emphasis on it. Having heard these points repeated at such length by all three bewigged lawyers in turn the jury may sometimes be left with the impression that they cannot safely convict, despite clear views they may have reached about the guilt of the accused.

All this may have some bearing on the high percentage of acquittals.

Yours faithfully,

JOSEPH DEAN,

The Hall,

West Brabourne, Ashford, Kent.

August 14.

Master class?

From Mr Hugh Walton

Sir, The lady who wishes to be awarded a degree of Mistress of Arts (letters, August 15) may take encouragement from the fact that, as long ago as the last century, my mother and her contemporaries at graduation were awarded the degree of Lady Literate in Arts (LLA), at St Andrews University, even though, as I have been told, this degree no longer exists.

Yours faithfully,

H. M. WALTON,

Queenscroft,

8 Third Acre Rise, Oxford.

August 15.

From Dr Christine Laine

Sir, In the past month my husband has received letters addressed solely to him regarding joint investments, my personal investments and our daughter's schooling. Whilst such out-dated practices persist there will always be a need for the Sue Wilkes of the world to challenge current thinking by voicing what appears, today, to be extreme views.

Yours faithfully,

C. LAINE,

Springfield, Marford, Wrexham.

August 15.

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046. E-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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A levels given a rollercoaster ride

From Mr Adam A. C. Barnard

Sir, If indeed higher A-level pass rates reflect a deflation in the value of England's gold standard, as the Institute of Management suggests (report, August 14), surely the answer is to address the content of the examinations, not the number taken.

In the days when A levels were valued more highly, typically only three were sat. The modern system of modular subjects, under which papers can be continually repeated across the two years of studying until the desired result is achieved, diffuses the intensity of work required, making it possible that one or more A levels will have been completed come the main sitting in June, and allowing candidates to select the best of perhaps four attempts at a single paper.

To regain our role as international leaders of education, we need to go back, not back.

Yours faithfully,

ADAM BARNARD,

3 The Terrace, Barnes, SW13.

August 15.

From Mr Victor Serebriakoff

Sir, The greater proportion that get it, the less the value of an A-level pass to the pupil and the employer; the greater the apparent value to the Government, the school and teachers. The Establishment claims an 87 per cent success rate (report, August 14); employers grumble about standards.

What is the use to an employer or applicant of a scholastic qualification that ensures only that the pupil is better than the worst-scoring 13 per cent of the quarter million students that took it?

Discussions between the teachers, inspectors and employers might help produce a compromise which resolved this paradox and made the results more meaningful and informative. If, for instance, the average percentile or even decile rating of each pupil were given it would be more informative. (A decile shows in which tenth the score is: the top, second, sixth or which.)

Preferably the measure should be based on added value. The percentile should be performance-related to mental age as well as to actual age, as in IQ tests, thus reflecting the value added by the teachers and the school. To know the school average of these ratings as well as the pass rate would also be helpful.

Yours faithfully,

VICTOR SEREBRIAKOFF

(President of the Mensa Foundation for Gifted Children),

Flat 1/6 The Paragon,

Blackheath, SE3.

August 16.

From Mr Christopher Wolland

Sir, Your leading article today asks if A-level students are sufficiently stretched. Having taught A-level history for 30 years, and as an examiner in the subject, I am convinced that the demands placed on students, in this

Haeckel's drawings

From Professor Terry J. Hamblin

Sir, Dr Michael Richardson's exposure of the scientific fraud of Professor Ernst Haeckel ("An embryonic liar", Mind and matter, August 11) tells us nothing new. The famous drawings which you reproduce are alluded to in both the *Biographical Dictionary of Scientists* and the *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* in editions published more than twenty years ago.

In fact, Haeckel was tried and convicted of scientific fraud by a university court in Jena, in Prussia. He admitted the offence but claimed that the majority of such drawings were similarly reconstructed from the imagination. Alas, recent evidence of scientific fraud, in Europe and the US, gives credence to his complaint.

Although Haeckel's theory that embryology recapitulates evolutionary development has been so thoroughly discredited, it was still being taught as one of the evidences for evolution when I was at school in the 1960s.

Yours faithfully,

TERRY J. HAMBLIN,

Royal Bournemouth Hospital,

Department of Haematology

and Oncology,

Castle Lane East,

Bournemouth, Dorset.

terjaha@aol.com

London's theatre

From the Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company

Sir, I can reassure Mr Richard Marshall (letter, August 13) that the Royal Shakespeare Company will not be bringing "a selection of their repertoire" to the Barbican in the forthcoming season, but will be transferring the whole of the Stratford repertoire to London, as well as a new production of *Henry V* in the Barbican Theatre and *A Comedy of Errors* at the Young Vic. The *Herbal Bed* continues to play at the Duchess.

I can also reassure him that our theatre in Stratford is not full of overseas tourists at all; our research shows us that only 13 per cent of our audience come from abroad.

Yours faithfully,

ADRIAN NOBLE,

Royal Shakespeare Company,

Royal Shakespeare Theatre,

Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

August 15.

subject at least, are just as great, and in some respects greater, than in the past.

A-level history teaches the student to make judgments through a rigorous examination of evidence, to come to conclusions about complex issues after thorough study and debate and to discriminate between verifiable fact and mere assertion. If only our politicians could do the same, particularly when speaking on the subject of education.

Many A-level students today produce work of which university students in the past would have been proud; I assure you, they are stretched.

Yours faithfully,

CHRISTOPHER WOLLAND

(Director of Sixth Form Studies,

Handsworth Grammar School),

The Firs, Station Road,

Wensbury, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

August 14.

From Mr David Anderson

Sir, Before collecting my own results this morning, I read Baroness Blackstone's effort to refute the "damaging canard" that A-level standards are falling ("A bridge for the gap year", August 14). I was not convinced.

Having studiously read exam papers, syllabuses and textbooks from previous years, I have no doubt that over the past decade there has been a phenomenal slide in the difficulty and rigour of the A-level examinations, at least in my own subjects of double maths, physics and chemistry. More difficult material has been constantly "falling off" the top end and replaced by new material arriving from GCSE.

A levels, in my view, are a devalued currency. The only way to arrest the slide is to admit the problem.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID ANDERSON,

4 Grass Yard, Kimbolton,

Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.

david_anderson@usa.net

August 14.

From Mr William Richards

Sir, My wife, who is a teacher of A-level economics and politics and an examiner of A-level business studies, posed me an intriguing question in the light of the inevitable cries that standards at A level have fallen again, apparently for the 16th year running.

Last night, no fewer than three world records were run on the Zurich athletics track (report, later editions, August 14), two of them by nearly 0.5 per cent faster than the previous record. By the same logic as is used for A-level results, surely it is far more plausible that the track in Zurich is actually 398 metres, rather than 400 metres long.

Yours sincerely,

W. C. P. RICHARDS,

17 Drake Avenue,

Mytheth, Camberley, Surrey.

wcpr@dial.pipex.com

August 14.

From Dr Richard E. M. Moore

Sir, Dr Richardson is reported as saying that Haeckel's drawings could not possibly have been done from life and as pointing out that they survive in modified form in *Gray's Anatomy*.

With one exception, none of my embryological illustrations, which have been reproduced in *Gray's Anatomy* since 1973, was done from life either. But many of the sources of information were not given and crucial scientific data which I provided to accompany my images was often changed. For such reasons I abandoned my task of illustrating the book.

The exceptional case was when I stumbled across a placenta in a bucket at Guy's Hospital and modified an illustration accordingly. Nobody, as far as I know, has commented upon or even noticed the peculiarity of introducing data more closely matching reality.

At least most people are unlikely to take Haeckel's pictures for photographs — a mistake often made over my illustrations in *Gray's Anatomy*, even by those who should know better.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD E. M. MOORE,

Tykesditch, 36 Oakridge Avenue,

Radlett, Hertfordshire.

August 12.

A fair fare?

From Mrs C. M. Potter

Sir, We are all being urged to use public transport but do these encouraging noises really mean anything?

Our daughter and granddaughter (aged six) recently travelled by train from Reading to Guildford, returning on a different day. The cost was £9.30 each way, as they had to buy single tickets, thus £18.60 for the double journey. Both journeys involved car transport to and from the stations.

For less than a third of this amount the whole family could have done the double journey from door to door.

Where is the incentive to change to public transport?

Yours faithfully,

CONSTANCE POTTER,

35 Linsers Wood Close,

Bramley, Guildford, Surrey.

August 17.

Elderly drivers and road safety

From Professor John Adams

Sir, The call for a ban on older drivers, by the family of the woman killed by a car driven by an 86-year-old woman — who also died, of a heart attack — is understandable in the circumstances (report, August 13). But if one were to choose age and sex as the principal criteria for eligibility to drive, one would not begin with 86-year-old women.

In Britain, motorists in the age band 16-19 are nine times more likely to be injured in a road accident than those over 80 — despite the fact that, because of their fragility, old people are much more likely than young people to be injured in collisions of the same severity. Severe crash involvement rates for licensed drivers are even more relevant to the question of who might be banned, since they include accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists as well as people in cars.

In the US the rate for 20-year-old male drivers is 19 times higher than that for 85-year-old women. Equivalent statistics are not published for Britain, but there is no reason to suppose they would be significantly different.

The elderly can see less well, and react to events less quickly, but — hugely offsetting these disabilities — they are more careful. They are very largely self-regulating. They drive less at night, avoid motorways, and gradually confine their journeys to short trips on familiar routes close to home.

There are many good reasons for reducing society's dependence on the car. But starting with the elderly would be neither equitable nor, in terms of road safety, effective.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN ADAMS,

University College London,

Geography Department,

26 Bedford Way, WCI.

jadam@geog.ucl.ac.uk

August 14.

From Mr Malcolm Stewart

Sir, The heading to Dr Stuttaford's article today, "Elderly drive less dangerously than young", is accurate as far as it goes. The young are more easily provoked, particularly by people driving slowly enough to be pulled over by the police.

If driving statistics categorised as "behaviour likely to contribute to an accident" existed, I suspect the elderly would show the young a thing or two.

Yours faithfully,

MALCOLM STEWART,

17a Burford Road,

Widney, Oxfordshire.

August 14.

Essex man

From Dr Chris Pond

Sir, I see that Essex County Council (report, 12 August) is trying to dispel the Essex Man image. Shame on them! Loyal Essex men and women have long cherished and even fostered the belief that they are "fleckless Philistines", in the full knowledge of its error.

After all, we don't want the quiet woods and fields, the lonely marshes and the pleasant towns and villages of God's Own County over-run by



COURT CIRCULAR

BALMORAL CASTLE

August 17: The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, accompanied by other Members of the Royal Family, disembarked from *HMY Britannia* this morning at Clibber Quay, Aberdeen Harbour, and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Aberdeen (Mrs Margaret Farquhar, the Lord Provost). Her Majesty and the Royal Highnesses subsequently drove to Balmoral Castle.

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Navy and Royal Marines
CAPTAIN: M P Fitzgerald to MoD Bristol, 17.10.97.

COMMANDER: M P Avery to MoD London in rank of Acting Captain, 12.12.97; W B Gledhill to HMS *Brusilov*, 11.8.97; C E Stanley to JSCSC, 1.9.97.

MAJOR: S V Balm to HQRM 6.1.98.

Retirements
COMMANDER: J S Aiken, 7.11.97; W M Hodson, 7.11.97.

Royal Air Force
GROUP CAPTAIN: A P N Lambert to HQ RAF, 20.9.97.

WING COMMANDER: M R Hooker to HQSTC, 2.8.97; P A Morris to RAF Lyneham, 4.8.97; N C Randle to RAF Coningsby, 4.8.97; A Thompson to RAF High Wycombe, 4.8.97; P Williams to BGS Washington, 4.8.97; D H Wood to RAF Coningsby, 4.8.97; E G Coulter to MoD (PE), 4.8.97.

Lonely heart gander steps out again

A LONELY heart advertisement on behalf of a pining gander has brought a spring to his step. The seven-year-old gander, Boy, was feeling unloved after all four of his flock were killed by foxes or stolen.

Arthur Green, 78, of Ledbury, Herefordshire, said: "When his last mate went, Boy just went to pieces. I had tried everybody I know who keeps geese, but no one had one available, so I put an advert in the paper."

The advertisement in the *Ledbury Reporter*, asking for "a mature white goose" to help a "lonely gander from pining away" brought a dozen replies. Mr Green chose Daisy and Spotless and the effect on Boy was immediate. "He's no longer an old Boy, more like a young stud. I'm sure we will have goslings in spring."



Boy, right, followed by his new mates Daisy and Spotless, parades around his old field at Ledbury

University news

Durham
Professor John Anstee has been appointed as a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Professor Tony Unsworth has been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Science and Dr Joy Palmer Dean for the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Queen's University, Belfast
Recent grants include: Health and Health Care Research Unit: Dr M Donnelly, £14,364 for the admissions of young people to psychiatric hospital care.

Northern Ireland Cancer Registry: Dr A Gavin, £20,000 over three years from BCH Trust Funds.

for cancer research.
Northern Ireland Technology Centre: Professor E Beatty, £28,367 over seven months from the European Union for the promotion of innovative management techniques in SME, and £84,207 over one year for a pre-pilot project.

Royal engagement

Princess Margaret, president, Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, visits the Craigendarroch Hotel, Ballater, 6.35, and accepts a cheque for the society from staff and guests of Stakis Hotels.

Birthdays today

Professor R.M. Acheson, epidemiologist, 76; Mr Brian Aldiss, science fiction writer, 72; Sir Bryan Askew, former chairman, Yorkshire Regional Health Authority, 67; Dame Josephine Barnes, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 85; Miss Nicola Bayle, writer and illustrator, 48; Sir James Birrell, former chief executive, Halifax Building Society, 64; Mr Neil Durden-Smith, sports commentator, 64; Mr Godfrey Evans, former cricketer, 77; Sir Robert Horton, chairman, Railtrack, 58; Dame Moura Lympany, concert pianist, 81; Sir John Mason, FRS, former director-general, Meteorological Office, 74; Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, 69; Mr H.S.K. Peppitt, chairman, Moorfields Eye Hospital, 67; Mr Roman Polanski, film director, 64; Mr Justice Potts, 66; Mr Robert Redford, actor and director, 60; Mr Patrick Showell, civil aviation and shipping expert, 78; Mr P.A.C. Smith, former chairman, Securicor, 77; Mr Patrick Swayze, actor, 45; General Bramwell H. Tillyer, former international leader, Salvation Army, 66; Mr Caspar Weinberger, GBE, former American Secretary of Defence, 80; Mr Charles Wilson, managing director, Mirror Group, 62; Miss Shelley Winters, actress, 75.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr K.N. Bushell and Miss E.A. Holland
The engagement is announced between Kevin Neil, youngest son of Mr and Mrs David Bushell, of Caerham, Surrey, and Elizabeth Ann (Lisa), younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Jonathan Holland, of South Nutfield, Surrey.

Mr P.A. Clark and Captain J.R. Orpin, AGC (ETS)
The engagement is announced between Philip, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Clark, and Jacqueline, daughter of Mr Brian Martin and Mrs Sylvia Freeman.

Mr C. Coomassu and Dr S.E. Wilson
The marriage will take place on September 6, at Newnham College, Cambridge, between C. Coomassu, son of Mr and Mrs Gilbert Coomassu, of London, W2, and Sarah Elizabeth, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Wilson, of County Durham.

Mr P.M.A. Corbin and Miss G.H. Keeley
The engagement is announced between Peter, younger son of Mr and Mrs Peter Corbin, of Dorchester, Dorset, and Genevieve, daughter of the late Mr William Brian Keeley and of Mrs W.B. Keeley, of Maidenhead, Berkshire.

Dr R.B. Godwin-Austen and Dr S. Shearman
The engagement is announced between Richard Godwin-Austen, of Highgate, London, and Clare, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin Ferrer Burton, of Byford, Herefordshire.

Mr R.W. Myers and Miss C.J.F. Buckton
The engagement is announced between Robert, only son of the late His Honour Mark Myers and of Mrs Katherine Myers, of Highgate, London, and Clare, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin Ferrer Burton, of Byford, Herefordshire.

Mr J.M. Dixon and Miss D.M. Fairhurst
The engagement is announced between Jonathan, only son of the late Mr J. Dixon and of Mrs P.E. James, of Canterbury, Kent, and Dulcie, only daughter of the late Mr J. Fairhurst and of Mrs A.M. Fairhurst, of Hardwick, Long Stratton, Norfolk.

Mr S.A. Jones and Miss N.J. Symes
The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Mr Ronald C. Jones, of Putney, Surrey, and Mrs Jeanette Jones, of Esher, Surrey, and Natasha, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roderick Symes, of Knowl Hill, Berkshire.

Mr A.W.L. Macdonnell and Miss J.M. McDaniel
The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Mr Patrick Macdonnell, of Fulham, London, and Mrs Sally Macdonnell, of Chobham, Surrey, and Jennie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger McDaniel, of Leatherhead, Surrey.

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Marriages

The Hon A.F. Needham and Miss L.F. Stephenson

The marriage took place on Saturday at St Martin's, Thompson, Norfolk, of the Hon Andrew Needham, younger son of Sir Richard and Lady Needham, of London, SW1, to Miss Lindsay Stephenson, daughter of Mr and Mrs Lance Stephenson, of Thompson, The Rev Hadley Richardson officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Lady Christina Needham and Mrs Helen Baker, Viscountess Newry and Merne was best man.

A reception was held at the home of the bride and the honeymoon will be spent in Africa.

Mr J. Spring Rice and Miss N.L. Robinson

The marriage took place on Saturday at St Michael's, Bray-on-Thames, Berkshire, of Mr Jonathan Spring Rice, son of the Hon Michael and Mrs Spring Rice, of Netley, Wiltshire, to Miss Natalie Lora Robinson, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Rivett Robinson, of Bracknell, Berkshire. The Rev G. Repath officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Fiona Lash Finkerton, Rebecca Fleck Pinkerton, Charlotte Hollingsworth, Francesca Robinson and Mandy Slater; Mr William Martin Fairburn was best man.

A reception was held at Queen's Eyot, Bray-on-Thames, and the honeymoon will be spent in St Lucia.

Mr S.J. Austin and Miss C.S. Charlton

The marriage took place on Friday, August 15, 1997, at Sandown Park, of Mr Stuart James Austin, younger son of Mr and Mrs I. Austin, of Haywards Heath, to Miss Claire Susan Charlton, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs S.G.E. Payne, of Guildford, Surrey. Mr Mark Austin was best man.

Mr S. Colyer and Miss M. Marshall

The marriage took place on August 16, at St Mary's Church, Great Baddow, between Mr Stephen Colyer, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Colyer, and Miss Michelle Marshall, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Marshall, both of Chelmsford, Essex.

Captain C.E. Coode and Miss G.S.D. Moore

The marriage took place on Saturday, August 16, 1997, at the Church of St John the Baptist, Burley, of Captain Charles E. Coode, of the Air Corps, to Miss Gabrielle S.D. Moore, of Ringwood, Hampshire. The Ven Alan Clarkson officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Miss Danielle Moore and Miss Alice Kelly; Mr Damian Bealey was best man.

A reception was held at the home of the bride.

Mr D.C.F. Pearson and Mrs R.A. Thomson

A service of blessing was held on Saturday, in Berwick St John Church, after the marriage at Salisbury Register Office of Mr David Pearson to Mrs Bridget Thomson. Canon Sydney Wilcox officiated.

Mr G.W. Vennart and Miss J.D. Wilson

The marriage took place on Saturday, August 16, at St Fannin's Church, Belfast, of Mr Gerard (Tigs) Vennart to Miss Jacqueline Wilson.

The honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr C.R. Wilson and Mrs J.C. Pickard

The marriage took place on August 15, in London, between Mr Clive Richard Wilson and Mrs Margaret Jennifer Pickard, widow of John Pickard.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Brook Taylor, mathematician, Edmonton, Middlesex, 1655; Laurence Shirley, 4th Earl Ferrers, 1720; Anniano Salieri, composer, Legnano, Italy, 1750; Meriwether Lewis, explorer, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1774; Fabian Bellinghousen, polar explorer, Orel, Russia, 1779; John Russell, Earl Russell, Prime Minister 1846-52 and 1865-66, London, 1792; Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, Vienna, 1830; Alain Robbe-Grillet, writer and film director, Bress, 1922.

DEATHS: Genghis Khan, Mongol Emperor 1175-1227;

Mongolia, 1227; Guido Reni, painter, Bologna, 1642; James Beattie, poet, Aberdeen, 1803; André-Jacques Garnerin, aeronaut, Paris, 1823; Honoré de Balzac, novelist, Paris, 1850; Sir William Fairbairn, BT, engineer, Moor Park, Surrey, 1874; William Henry Hudson, naturalist, London, 1922; Sir Frederick Ashton, ballet choreographer, Suffolk, 1988.

The National Fire Service was established in Britain, 1941.

The first oral contraceptive was marketed by the Searle Drug Company in America, 1960.

The Queen Mary was sold to the town of Long Beach, California, 1967.

Nature notes

PIGEONS and doves are almost the only birds singing during the long, hot days of August. Collared doves sing out from their repeated triple coo from rooftops, wood pigeons coo more deeply in the trees.

Families of swallows fly high over lakes and ponds to catch the small insects rising from them; sometimes one will dive down and take a sip of water before regaining the flock. Families of goldfinches and greenfinches are still flying about together and will soon join up into larger flocks. The goldfinches are feeding on thistle and ragwort seeds.



The goldfinch

the greenfinches picking up scattered grain in the fields, though not much is left for them nowadays by the combine harvesters.

Much of the barley and wheat has been harvested; at

the edge of some fields, tall oats from crops of earlier years are still left standing. The white flowers of scabious mayweed are spreading through the stubble.

Along railway embankments golden rod mingles with the rosebay willow-herb, and the dull gold flowers of fleabane are common on roadside verges. By rivers, the great water dock has clusters of pink flowers, and massive leaves stretching four feet. A new generation of small tortoiseshell butterflies is feeding on the buddleia.

DJM

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

DEATHS

GABRIEL - John, died peacefully on 14th August at home, aged 82. He was a loving father and grandfather. Buried at St. Paul's Church, London, on 18th August.

WALTON - On August 13th to Lucinda (née Wright) and Peter, a daughter and son, respectively, of the late Mr and Mrs J. Walton, of London, on 13th August.

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DEATHS

GABRIEL - John, died peacefully on 14th August at home, aged 82. He was a loving father and grandfather. Buried at St. Paul's Church, London, on 18th August.

WALTON - On August 13th to Lucinda (née Wright) and Peter, a daughter and son, respectively, of the late Mr and Mrs J. Walton, of London, on 13th August.

WATSON - On August 13th 1997, in Cape Town to Jessica (née Wilson) and James, a son, of the late Mr and Mrs J. Watson, of London, on 13th August.

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OBITUARIES

TOM ECKERSLEY

Tom Eckersley, OBE, graphic designer, died on August 1 aged 82. He was born on September 30, 1914.

The poster work of Tom Eckersley forms an unbroken bridge from the stark modernism of David Bomberg and Edward Wadsworth to the colourful graphics and pop art of the 1960s. There is no fuss or waste in his designs, and their purpose is communicated at once. His bold images were built from silhouettes and blocks of flat colour, geometrical or smooth which seduced the eye into reading the message from the advertiser or the ministry. Whether sponsored by government or commerce, the early posters aimed to beguile urban man into a frenetic conformity and an appreciation of how lucky he was to live in the age of mass production and the motor car. Later, the touch was rather lighter and wittier, with more visual puns.

Eckersley flourished in the poster days of the 1930s, from the 1930s to the 1960s, when enterprises such as Shell-Mex, London Transport and the General Post Office were commissioning prolifically and supporting some remarkable artists, ranging from Rex Whistler to Duncan Grant and Ben Nicholson. For their money they got not only effective publicity, but some of the finest graphic work done in Britain this century. Posters by Eckersley and his friends are now preserved in museums and appear at Sotheby's.

The son of a Methodist minister, Tom Eckersley was born in Lowton, Lancashire, into a house full of books. He spent much of his childhood reading and drawing, and at 16 was enrolled by his mother into the Salford School of Art, where he won the Heywood medal for best student.



"The early Thirties made a strong and lasting impression on me," he later said. "At that time the poster was perhaps the most significant form of publicity. The great Cassandre and other French designers produced avant-garde posters, as did McKnight Kauff and Hans Schlegel in England."

By the time he was 20, he had teamed up with another student, Eric Lumbers, and the pair were designing posters to offer to agencies. Moving to London, they taught together at the Westminster School of Art in 1938-39, and by 1940 "Eckersley Lumbers" was well established, with work for the BBC, Austin Reed, and the agency W. S. Crawford. They also produced some headpieces and illustrations for *Radio Times*.

At the beginning of the war, the partners separated, Lumbers going into the Army and

Eckersley into the RAF as a cartographer. After living in an RAF station producing maps and technical drawings, he was eventually transferred to the Air Ministry's publicity office. With the return of peace he briefly attempted to revive the partnership, but it was not to be, and instead he built a strong freelance career. In the 1940s he illustrated his wife's book *Cat of Nine Lives*, and did stipple-brush drawings for *Animals on Parade*, with words by E. A. Cabrelli.

In 1948 he was appointed OBE when only 34, in recognition of his public service posters for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, such as "Replace covers, prevent falls" and "Broken rungs cause broken limbs". These had been displayed in factories and elsewhere as part of the war effort, their slogans urging everyone to be alert to the consequences of all their

actions — and of "careless talk". The series continued into peacetime with a number of road safety exhortations.

On a lighter note, he designed the poster for the 1949 film *Whisky Galore*, and a series of six posters with the legend "Good mornings begin with Gillette" with happy, well-shaven billy-goats, pandas and Egyptians, head to head with their ungroomed counterparts.

In 1957 Eckersley became head of design at the London College of Printing, where he taught for 20 years and was honoured with a retrospective in 1975. Alongside his teaching, he thought it essential to continue as a practitioner, and his later clients included Cook's, Unicef and the World Wide Fund for Nature. He also worked as a national inspector of art and design courses. He was appointed Royal Designer for Industry in 1963, won the Chartered Society of Designers' medal in 1990, and held a number of design fellowships.

During the 1980s and 1990s there were regular exhibitions of his work, and it began to be collected internationally. He was always grateful for the "enlightened" patronage of Frank Pick at London Transport, Colonel Beddington at Shell, and their peers; but he was scornful of the brazen commercialism of modern poster design, which with its aggressive, computer-generated images and fearful typefaces has none of his humour or visual good manners. "There has always been a certain amount of bad work around," he said in 1990, "but I never thought it would turn out like this."

He was twice married, first to Daisy Brown, and then to the painter Mary Kessell. He is survived by his wife and two of his three sons from his first marriage. Another son, Paul, died earlier this year.



TOBY MARTEN

Lieutenant-Commander George G. (Toby) Marten, DSC, Criche Down campaigner, died on August 15 aged 78. He was born on December 28, 1918.

KNOWN always as Toby, Commander George Marten won himself a small place in political history by winning a victory for the individual over the incivility of civil servants. In 1954 he became the first layman to force a minister to resign, over the ownership of Criche Down, in Dorset, and the manner in which the case had been handled. His tenacity in fighting the bureaucrats made him something of a hero, at a time when the public was losing patience with a State still operating as though wartime emergency justified the overruling of private interests.

The case concerned a 328-acre slice of Criche Down, at Wimborne, belonging to the family of Marten's wife, which had been compulsorily purchased in 1937 as an Air Ministry bombing range. After the war, when it was no longer needed, it was not offered back to the family, but passed instead to the Ministry of Agriculture, thence to the Agricultural Land Commission, thence to the Commissioners of Crown Lands, who found a new tenant, Marten, whose wife would have inherited, repeatedly applied to buy or rent the land, but was refused, despite earlier assurances. So by stirring up local feeling, involving the press and using his political connections, Marten forced Churchill's Minister of Agriculture, Sir Thomas Dugdale, to hold a public inquiry.

The resulting report, issued in May 1954 by Sir Andrew Clark, stated that the men from the ministry had shown "a most regrettable attitude of hostility" to Marten, "engendered solely by a feeling of irritation that any member of the public should have the temerity to... question the acts or decisions of officials". Dugdale told the House that no further action was necessary, but in June he faced 150 protesting backbenchers, one of whom, Sir Waldron Smithers, said he should dismiss the officials or resign. In a Commons debate on July 20, Dugdale repeated that the civil servants had not willfully deceived him, but outlined a new policy regarding land acquired for wartime purposes, giving former owners first refusal. He then concluded by offering his resignation to a startled House.

This gesture was regarded as reviving the principle of ministerial responsibility, and has often been cited as an example of probity and a precedent for proper action. Dugdale was generally supposed to have been kept in the dark by his department, and I. F. Nicolson's *The Mystery of Criche Down* (1986) quotes him as saying: "As a Conservative minister I failed to

detect this particular hang-over of Socialist legislation. I consider I have let my colleagues down and that is why I shall resign."

He was not, however, being so candid and quixotic as at first appeared. The release of private and official papers 30 years later showed that he had been fully informed about what was going on, and that there had been division in the Government, with Churchill and one of Dugdale's Under-Secretaries, Lord Nugent of Guildford, urging that the land be handed back. After Dugdale's resignation, Nugent and the other Under-Secretary, Peter Carrington, also offered to go, but Churchill refused to accept.

In his memoirs, Carrington, who promptly resigned as Foreign Secretary when the Falkland Islands were invaded in 1982, recalled "a certain amount of incompetence and administrative bungling" during the Criche Down affair. But Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, the Home Secretary at the time, considered it a powerful blow against collectivism, which affected even Labour Party policy. Marten got his land back.

George Goslin Marten was educated at Dartmouth before going into the Navy. As First Lieutenant serving in HMS *Penn* in 1942, he won the DSC during Operation Pedestal off Valletta, when he boarded the burning tanker *Ohio* to attach a tow-rope. The tanker, which was transporting fuel for Spitfires, made it into the Grand Harbour, and the operation helped to save Malta for the Allies.

Marten later saw action in the Greek Islands, and in 1947 he was appointed Naval Ensign to King George VI. In 1949 he married the Hon Mary Sturt, and after the Korean War he resigned from the Navy to take charge of the 7,500-acre estate she had inherited. He was especially interested in forestry, and became an expert on the growing of timber.

Shortly after the Criche Down case, he won a second victory, this time in court, concerning the use of another part of the estate sold during the war, at Tarrant Rushton. This land had been used by the Air Ministry as an airfield for gliders on D-Day, and was subsequently leased to a private company, Flight Refuelling. The company was attempting to expand and to use Tarrant Rushton for other industrial purposes when Marten pointed out that the land was subject to a covenant restricting it to agricultural or defence uses. The court dismissed the argument that publicly leased land could not be covered by a private covenant.

In 1961 Marten was High Sheriff of Dorset, and for some years he was on the candidates' list at Conservative Central Office, but was never called — perhaps because he had once brought down a Tory minister. He is survived by his wife, five daughters and a son.



JOHN WILKIN

F. John Wilkin, CBE, DFM, Pathfinder navigator and Chief Accountant for the House of Commons, 1962-80, died on August 4 aged 80. He was born on August 15, 1916.

AS WELL as being a devoted servant of the House of Commons, John Wilkin had a notable wartime career as a navigator for the RAF Pathfinder Force. He won his Distinguished Flying Medal in the summer of 1943 for the tenacity he displayed during 27 operational sorties against targets in Germany, Italy and enemy-occupied Czechoslovakia.

Frederick John Wilkin was brought up in South London, attending Southwark Central School along with George Brown, the future deputy leader of the Labour Party. Wilkin was keen to get on, so after leaving school he went on to Morley College in Lambeth. In 1938, he was appointed a junior clerk on the financial side of the Air Ministry at Admiralty House in Kingsway.

At the outbreak of war his department was moved to Westminster School for Girls in Gloucestershire. Loath to remain behind a desk, he hired a tandem and cycled with his young friend "Mac" Allen to Gloucester, where he enlisted in the RAF.

After a spell in Norfolk on airfield defence, where much time was wasted polishing ammunition, he was selected for training as a navigator in Canada. For part of their training (this being before Pearl Harbor), his class were sent down to Miami where, in plain clothes, they learnt about navigation on Pan American Clipper flying-boats.

Back home, Wilkin qualified as a sergeant navigator and flew in Wellington bomb-



ers before switching to Lancasters early in 1943. By this time he was part of the Pathfinder Force — selected airmen of Bomber Command whose task was to identify targets, mark them with flares and control the attack of the main bomber force. This involved cruising around the target area until the bomber-aimer on the last aircraft of their phase of the operation gave the word "bombs gone". This was a dangerous business, exposing the Pathfinder aircraft to flak and fighter attack.

Returning one night to the home airfield, Wilkin's pilot found that their plane had been so badly damaged that the undercarriage could not be lowered. With great skill he landed the aircraft on its belly, but with no brake application available it slid off the end of the runway into the fields beyond. The wireless operator, the only one with a torch to hand, went round identifying his comrades. Remarkably, they had all survived.

After 45 operational sorties, Wilkin was awarded the Permanent Path Finder Badge. He was then commissioned, rose to the rank of squadron leader and taught young navigators at Hemswell in Lin-

colnshire. In 1946 he returned to the Air Ministry in Northumberland Avenue.

One day in 1955 a call came through from the Treasury asking if Wilkin would go for an interview with the House of Commons accountant, who wanted a good man for his office. This was before the days when it was considered necessary to set up time-consuming and expensive boards for every appointment, however junior. Following this viva voce examination, Wilkin was engaged as an assistant accountant.

In 1962 he became the principal House of Commons accountant, an appointment he held with distinction until 1980, when he was further promoted to be head of the Administration Department until his retirement in 1981.

Wilkin was a humorous and agreeable companion. His shrewd knowledge of human nature enabled him to assist Members of Parliament on financial matters with tact and efficiency.

On retirement from the House he enjoyed working in other fields. He was an associate member of the special trustees of Charing Cross Hospital; a vice-chairman of the Hammonds and Fulham District Health Authority; a member of the Council of the National Incorporated Beneficent Society; and a Freeman of the City of London. He was also chairman of the Wickenby Register, the association of members of 12 and 626 Squadrons who had flown out of Wickenby airfield in Lincolnshire.

He married twice. Marjorie Wilson, whom he married in 1943, died in 1972, and in 1975 he married Laura Eason, who died in 1993. He is survived by a daughter from his first marriage and by a stepson and stepdaughter from the second.

MOHAMMED AL-JAWAHIRI

Mohammed al-Jawahiri, Iraqi poet, died in Damascus, Syria, on July 27 aged 98. He was born in Najaf, Iraq, on July 26, 1899.

AS IRAQ's modern poet of enlightenment and compassion, Mohammed al-Jawahiri was one of the Arab world's most influential 20th-century poets. He was an outstanding literary figure in the whole Arab world, though in the formative early part of his life he was an ethnic Iranian with Ottoman citizenship.

These contradictory emotional pulls perhaps explain much of his erratic behaviour. They certainly broadened his vision beyond the narrow confines of Arab nationalism, and gave his poetry and extensive journalism their characteristic humanism.

He flirted with most of the governments of independent Iraq, including that of King Faisal I, who called him "my son", but he always quarrelled with them in the end. Generally, he found the bland claims of Arab nationalists unconvincing, and the single state they wished to create undesirable.

Mohammed Mahdi al-Jawahiri was born in the ancient city of Najaf in southern Iraq, to the family of a Persian-speaking Shia cleric when Iraq was a mere collection of provinces in the Ottoman Empire. His father earned his livelihood by praying for Iranian pilgrims at the shrine of Imam Ali, the assassinated fourth caliph and cousin of Muhammad, the founder of the Islamic faith. His grandfather, Abd Ali, had written a book on literature, *The Jewels of Words*. The family name, "The Jeweller", was derived from the title.

Jawahiri discovered his own literary talents early and decided not to follow in his

father's footsteps. He published his first collection of poems in 1923, by which time he was highly politicised as a result of the trauma of the First World War. Mesopotamia had been seized by Britain and declared a new state, despite the animosity between its largest three communities: Shia Arabs and Iranians in the centre, and Kurds in the north.

This single hurried act, which involved the mustering of Kurdish villages and the importation of a prince from Arabia, set the

stage for the later bloody history of that unfortunate land, and made Jawahiri an active opponent of British influence in the region.

A telling story about the life of Jawahiri at that time is told in the autobiography of Sadiq al-Husri, one of a group of Syrian Arab nationalists whom the new King Faisal had imported to imbue the disparate citizens of the new state with a national identity. As director of education, Husri later wrote that he interviewed Jawahiri for a post in a primary school. When he asked about the applicant's ethnicity, the reply was: "I'm Iranian." This was

most inconvenient, and the director had to say that he could not employ the young man. The applicant was surprised. "Why," he inquired, "don't we have any Syrian teachers?"

As the young man was already a well-known poet and wrote in Arabic, he was entitled to applying for Iraqi citizenship; but only three days later he published a poem about the natural beauties of Iran, for which he was sacked, because his poem was declared to be that of a *Shu'ubi* — a non-Arab who regards Arabs as inferior.

Jawahiri's alienation from the ideologies ruling Iraq was to persist. Although he refused to join the Communist Party, he was at one time so closely associated with that persecuted group that he had to flee to Eastern Europe. At other times, he would wear a Kurdish hat to show solidarity with the rebels in the northern highlands, and he grew specially fond of the Kurdish leader, Kala Talabani. Throughout his life he pleaded for tolerance and love among antagonistic nationalities.

One Iraqi ruler with whom Jawahiri never flirted was Saddam Hussein, despite the attractive bribes he was offered. When Saddam became President in 1979, the poet went into exile, never to return.

Jawahiri's verse is written in the traditional *baḥr* metres of Arabic poetry, and some of his more lyrical songs were adopted by successful singers in other countries, so that he came to be known as "the singer of the sunlit". This did not make him rich, but he spent his last two decades in Damascus in relative comfort. A tall, slim man, he was lucky in his good health and survived by two sons and three daughters.



Church news

Appointments
The Rev Sam Ashton, Rector, St Wendard's with Orp, Garway, Trete, Michaelchurch, Penzoyd, Welsh Newton and Elanroth, and Rural Dean of Ross and Archenfield (Hereford), to be also Prebendary of Hereford Cathedral.
The Rev Chris Atkinson, Rector, Hundred River (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich), to be Priest-in-Charge, Eye with Bedfordshire and Yaxley, and Bedfordshire, and Ockold (same diocese).
The Rev Carl Attwood, Rector, Colwall with Upper Colwall and Coddington (Hereford), to be also Prebendary of Hereford Cathedral.
The Rev Geoffrey Coles, Vicar, Wyke (Bradford), to be Priest-in-Charge, Riddlesden (same diocese).

The Rev Frederick George, Rector, Wainford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich), to be Vicar, Jamestown (St Helena).
The Rev Roger Guiver, Vicar, Acomb Moor (York), to be Vicar, Middlesbrough St Thomas (same diocese).
The Rev Albert Hodge, Priest-in-Charge, St Paul's, Widnes (Liverpool), to be Curate, Upper Wharfedale Group of Parishes (same diocese).
The Rev Theodore Hull, Chaplain, Little Plumstead Hospital (Norwich), to be also Honorary Curate, Freethorpe, Halvergate with Tunstall and Wickhampton, and Cantley, Reedham, Limpenehoe with Southwood (same diocese).
The Rev David Paton, Priest-in-Charge, St Vedast, Foster Lane (London), to be Priest-in-Charge, St Bonolph-without-

Bishopsgate (same diocese).
The Rev Dr Martin Percy, Director, Lincoln Theological Institute for the Study of Religion and Society (Sheffield), to be also Honorary Canon of Sheffield Cathedral (same diocese).
The Rev Malcolm Riches, Curate, Swaythling (Winchester), to be Priest-in-Charge, Boldre and South Beddesley (same diocese).
The Rev Andrew Rugg, Team Vicar, Benwell, with special responsibility for The Venerable Bede (Newcastle), to be Vicar, Weetslade (same diocese).
The Rev Frank Rumball, Rector, Condoover with Frodesley, Acton Burnell and Piffard (Hereford), to be also Prebendary of Hereford Cathedral.
The Rev Brian Sagar, Vicar,

Wing (Oxford), to be Priest-in-Charge, Diddington, Linle Flaxton, and Southoe (Ely).
The Rev Fiona Stewart-Darling, Chaplain, Gloucester College of Higher Education (Gloucester), to be Chaplain, University of Portsmouth.
Canon Gill Sumner, Priest-in-Charge, Wistanow, and Local Ministry Officer (Hereford), to be also Prebendary of Hereford Cathedral.
The Rev Paul Walker, Priest-in-Charge, Oakenshaw and half-time Diocesan Youth Adviser (Bradford), to be Vicar, Wrose (same diocese).
The Rev Hector Wanless, Priest-in-Charge, Port Nolloth (Cape Town, South Africa), to be Priest-in-Charge, Aylesham with Adisham, and Goodstone with Chillenden (Canterbury).

CAST-IRON HOUSES
NEW TYPE APPROVED
BY MINISTRY

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

The Ministry of Health have given approval to houses the outer walls of which are constructed of standard cast-iron plates, erected on a system devised by a Sheffield firm. These Thorncliffe-type cast-iron houses are eligible for the subsidy under the Housing Acts of 1923 and 1924.

The outer walls are rough cast with a heavy layer of concrete. A patented method of jointing is employed between the flanges. The division walls and chimney breasts are built of brickwork bonded into the cast-iron shell. The internal walls to the ground-floor rooms and bedrooms are formed of wood smoothing covered with asbestos cement sheets. The roof is covered with tiles. The windows are wood casements securely bolted to the cast-iron plates, while with the exception of the scullery and larder the floors are made of wood.

Definite prices are quoted for erection within a 50-mile radius of the Thorncliffe ironworks, near Sheffield, but are exclusive of the cost of foundations, drains, fencing, and footpaths, which obviously depend upon the nature of the site. For a house containing, on

ON THIS DAY

August 18, 1925



After the First World War, there was a great need to build houses at reasonable prices and as quickly as possible. A three-bedroom detached house, complete with windows and doors, was erected in 30 working hours in Sheffield.

The ground floor, a living room measuring nearly 18ft by 14ft 3in, a kitchen, larder, coalpace, and porch, and on the first floor, three bedrooms, a bathroom, and a landing, the price is £435 each, delivered and erected in quantities of not less than six.

The feature of the system is the extreme rapidity of erection. A specimen pair have been erected in 30 working hours in Sheffield, and are now available for inspection. Cast-iron shells of houses, complete with windows and outside doors, are also quoted on similar conditions at £150 per house.

The Official Gazette of the County Coun-

cils' Association for August deals with how county councils can stimulate housing in their areas. It recalls the suggestions made last March by Mr Neville Chamberlain that county councils should try to collate local housing needs with the idea of securing the benefit of large production all over the country; utilize their powers under Section 5 of the Housing Act, 1924, to encourage owner-occupiers and public-utility societies; use the same powers to advance money to owners for alterations which will make houses more useful; and encourage craftsmen to build for themselves by their own labour.

All these suggestions have received the cordial recommendation of the executive committee of the association, who state that they are in no sense antagonistic to the work of the existing housing authorities, but intend to assist those authorities to obtain the most beneficial results from the exercises of the functions entrusted to them by Parliament.

County councils are asked to inform the association of any action that is taken, and the Bucks County Council have replied that they are adopting a plan of giving guarantees to approved building societies operating in the county so as to enable the societies to advance to owner-occupiers loans of up to 90 per cent of the value of houses.

in:
this year: 436
1,862